Saipan Vegas, Club 88 talk with House's Gaming Committee. PAGE 2
MVA allocates $15K for World Tourism festivities. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXI, Issue No. 187

www.saipantribune.com | TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

A photo provided by the Department of Public Safety shows the missing woman, Liona Charley,
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Woman missing since Sept. 17

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety continues to search for a woman who has been reported missing since Sept. 17.

According to DPS spokesperson Dre Pangelinan, Liona Charley, a 44-year-old Kosraean woman, is believed to have gone missing around the first week of September. However, the family only reported

See WOMAN on Page 4

Senate session to tackle conference committee's report on budget plan

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hofschneider

Villagomez

Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) called yesterday for a Senate emergency session today, Tuesday, to address the "product" or report of the bicameral conference committee that worked out a mutually acceptable budget for the CNMI government's operations in fiscal year 2022.

See SENATE on Page 4

'Vaccinations boost hope for Travel Bubble with Japan'

» Governor says other countries looking at how CNMI implement COVID-19 protocols

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seeing the sustained strides that Japan is making in its vaccination drive against COVID-19 gives hope for the CNMI in its aim to launch a

See BOOST on Page 4

COASTAL CLEANUP

Bureau of Environment and Coastal Quality's Water Quality Surveillance & Nonpoint Source program manager Larry Maurin picks up a piece of frayed plastic rope at Micro Beach early Saturday morning for the 2021 International Coastal Cleanup. Hundreds of volunteers fanned out across Saipan last Saturday for the annual ICC, which had the theme "Connect and Collect."

Story on Page 7 IVA MAURIN

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6:45pm, Sept. 20, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Fully Vaccinated:	81.2%
Days since last community transmission	180

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	29,907
Fully Vaccinated:	29,099
Moderna	
Initiated:	4,853
Fully Vaccinated:	4,509
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	791

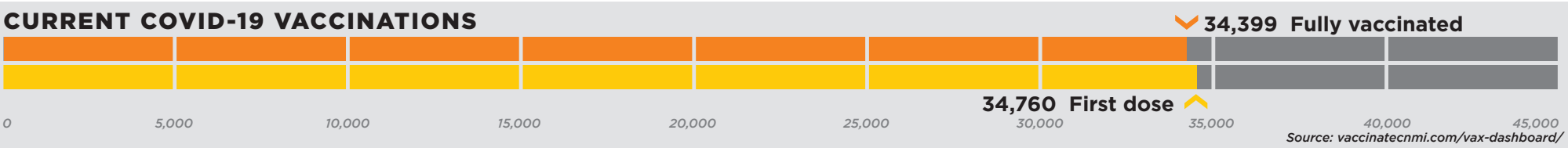
GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	13,532	NU*	13,532
Recovered	10,657	NU*	10,657
Active	2,696	NU*	2,696
Deaths	171	NU*	179

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	263	0	263
Traced via Travel Screening	226	0	226
Traced via Community Screening	37	0	37
Deaths	2	0	2

*No update

Source: Joint Information Center – Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



Source: vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

INSIDE

LOCAL
"Island Cuisine Night" last Friday highlighted the CNMI's culture through local delicacies.

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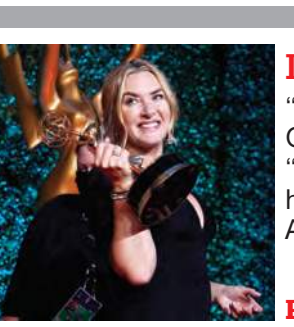
ASIA
Philippine boxing icon and senator Manny Pacquiao says he will run for president in 2022.

PAGE 13



LIFE & STYLE
"The Crown," "The Queen's Gambit," and "Ted Lasso" win top honors at the Emmy Awards.

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Local

Saipan Vegas, Club 88 talk with House's Gaming Committee

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Bartley A. Jackson, general manager of MP Holdings LLC that owns Saipan Vegas in Chalan Laulau, told the House of Representatives Gaming Committee Friday that they want to help the CNMI resolve its financial problems but the company has to also remain viable on order to be able to do that.

"We want to help but we cannot help if we cannot survive," said Jackson during a meeting of the Gaming Committee last week.

He said with the Gaming Committee's understanding and cooperation, they are confident they can find a workable accommodation that will help the Legislature raise additional funding and allow MP Holdings LLC to remain in business.

Jackson was supposed to conduct presentation about their company and the impact to their business of Saipan Local Law 22-6, but Gaming Committee chair Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan) asked him to instead provide them a copy of the presentation or just reserve it for their next meeting because they didn't have enough time that day.

SLL 22-6 essentially doubled the license fees of e-gaming machines. Jackson recently wrote Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair Sen. Vinnie Vinson F. Sablan (R-Saipan), requesting on behalf of the owners of Saipan Vegas and Club 88 to have SLL 22-6 amended. He said Saipan Vegas and Club 88 are willing to pay an additional $500 license fee per machine.

Jackson said that, in its current form, SLL 22-6 will force them to close their doors, and that 70-plus individuals will lose their jobs and millions of dollars will be lost to the CNMI treasury.

He said his goal at that meeting was to share the financial dynamics of the e-gaming industry and provide some understanding of how their businesses work. "We want to help you make the most informed decisions," he told the committee.

Bartley A. Jackson, general manager of MP Holdings LLC that owns Saipan Vegas in Chalan Laulau, confers with counsel, Michael Dotts, during a meeting with the House of Representatives Gaming Committee at the House chamber last Friday.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Jackson said MP Holdings LLC first entered the e-gaming industry in 2016 with the purchase of Club 88 in Garapan and then opened Saipan Vegas in Chalan Laulau in 2018.

"To the outsider, the industry looks easy and extremely profitable. Unfortunately, that is far from reality," he said, adding that if the e-gaming industry is profitable, why are there only two e-gaming venues remaining in the CNMI?

He noted that Club C e-gaming at Kanoa Resort had to close due to slow play pre-pandemic and had been losing money for years when it closed. He said casino licensee Imperial Pacific International, which has over 50% of its floor space dedicated to e-gaming, apparently suffered the same fate. He said Saipan Vegas and Club 88 are the last two remaining e-gaming venues on Saipan.

He pointed out that MP Holding is a contributing member of the community. Every year the company gives away thousands and thousands of dollars to community charities in need of assistance, he said.

"The challenges of the past

See VEGAS on Page 4

CLICK IT OR TICKET
DAY & NIGHT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
CLICK-IT OR TICKET
National Seat Belt Enforcement Mobilization
Child Passenger Safety Week
September 19-25, 2021
National Seat Check Saturday
September 25, 2021
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TIPIYEEW–INAFA'MÅOLIK MARIANAS
LOGO DESIGN
Competition
Guidelines:
1. The contest is open to all Elementary age children
2. The Logo should symbolize both indigenous of the Mariana Islands; Chamorro & Carolinian
3. All entries must be in drawing or digital format
4. Only one entry per participant will be accepted
5. Deadline for submission for both soft and hard copy will be on or before Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at the Carolinian Affairs Office located Beach Road Garapan west of the Bank of Guam, main branch.
6. Each entry will have its designated number
7. All participants or entries are invited to the 2021 Tipiyeew-Inafa'måolik on Saturday, October 2, 2021.
8. Top 5 prizes, First place will receive $500 cash.
9. Decision of the panel of judges with the following criteria is final and incontestable.
10. Winning entry shall become property of the CNMI Government - Tipiyeew-Inafa'måolik Marianas Committee.
YOUR ENTRY COULD BE OUR NEXT LOGO!
For Inquiries, please contact Agatha @ 234-6385 or email at agatha.ketebengang@gmail.com.

MVA allocates $15K for World Tourism festivities

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Marianas Visitors Authority board has approved the appropriation of $15,000 for the number of events planned for the upcoming World Tourism Day on Sept. 27.

According to MVA managing director Priscilla Iakopo, it was originally estimated that hosting the festivities would cost around $9,000 but they realized the event would cost more because of the number of activities they've lined up.

"We were requesting of $9500 [but] it looks like after plugging in a few numbers, we might need more funding rather than $9,500. It could [cost] up to $15,000 for this list of events, or this list of activities for this day," she said.

Iakopo said MVA has a handful of events planned for Sept. 27, including a themed run, various contests, cleanups, and more.

"With communications with the United Nations World Tourism Organization, we were informed that Sept. 27 is World Tourism Day. We would like to have a series of activities for that day. That would include having a social media contest or radio trivia, we wanted to do cleanups as well as having historical and cultural activities for high school students to visit the museum as well as demonstrations of art and local cuisines at the Sugar King Park. In the evening, we would like to have a World Tourism Day sunset fun run. I actually called the Carolinian Affairs Office as well as Indigenous Affairs Office if they wanted to join this list of events," she said.

Iakopo said the themed run will be special as it will embrace the CNMI culture. "For this sunset fun run, we were thinking of having a contest in 'dress in your indigenous cultural wear' and we will issue out prizes for that. This is to really emphasize the importance of tourism here in the CNMI, as it is our economic driver and industry," she said.

During the MVA monthly board meeting last week, the board unanimously voted in support of the planned activities.

CPA employees may now avail of new self-care leave

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI has faced various distressing events, one after another, that many are still learning to cope with. This includes super typhoons that devastated the islands and now, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Such traumatizing events has had and continues to impact the mental health of many CNMI residents and the Commonwealth Ports Authority is coming to the aid of its employees after it approved time off for employees specifically so they could deal with their mental health.

According to CPA chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds, the board approved the self-care leave policy during CPA's monthly board meeting on Tinian last Friday, and she is excited for the new policy to be implemented.

"The CPA board recognizes that mental health is a critical component to the overall wellbeing of our employees. We want to be proactive and create a workplace culture that empowers our employees to practice self-care before they get burnt out or suffer from further mental stress," she said.

The hope, King-Hinds said, is for CPA employees to practice self-care before they reach the point of feeling burnt out and affecting the workplace.

"Mental health struggles negatively impact the workplace; it decreases productivity and performance, leads to poor communication with coworkers, and leads to other stress related illnesses. We hope that our employees will take advantage of this new leave policy, which gives them a day off per quarter, to practice self-care before they begin to get the point where they feel completely burnt out," she said.

According to the new leave policy, its purpose is to create a workforce with more satisfied and more engaged employees.

"Mental distress poses long-term consequences for CPA by harming employees' mental state of mind, productivity, and overall job satisfaction. CPA seeks to promote its employees' wellbeing by preventing and managing employee mental distress and creating a culture of inclusiveness and mental health awareness. Thus, it is CPA policy to provide its employees with self-care leave for the purpose of managing work-related stress and to create a workforce with more satisfied employees and higher employee engagement," it states.

The newly approved leave is separate from and is in addition to other CPA employee benefits, such as annual leave and sick leave. CPA employees are not entitled to payment for any unused self-care leave.

"CPA urges and encourages employees to use self-care leave for the purpose of promoting one's own mental health wellness. Self-care leave must be approved by an employee's supervisor or manager prior to the employee

See CPA on Next Page

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CNMI SBDC to highlight local businesswomen

In celebration of American Business Women's Day, the CNMI Small Business Development Center at the Northern Marianas College will be hosting an online information session featuring several entrepreneurs who will be sharing their experiences, challenges, business tips and money-making habits.

The session will be held Sept. 22, 2021, on Zoom from 3:30pm to 5:30pm, ChST.

The event will highlight entrepreneurs Cherese Palacios (Mind2Muscle, owner), Asia Hilario (Self-Love Coach, owner), Momoko Halstead (SPN.dylus670, owner), Lei Tenorio (Marianas Crane, owner), Elina Gharti Chhetri (Marianas Creations, co-owner), Mercilynn Palec (Chiku Chiku, owner), and Aysha Cabrera (Neni Girl Nails, owner).

All the guest speakers have started small businesses in the CNMI. More information about the owners and their businesses can be found on their respective Instagram pages:

- Mind2Muscle: @mind-xmuscle670
- Asia Hilario: @asia.hilario
- SPN.dylus670: @SPN.dylus670
- Marianas Crane: @mar-ianascrane
- Marianas Creations: @marian-ascreationssaipan
- Chiku Chiku: @chikuchiku.official
- Neni Girl Nails: @shopnenigirl

Interested individuals who would like to register or to find out more about starting or growing a small business can email cnmisbdc@pacificsbdc.com or call (670) 287-6888. A confirmation email with a Zoom link and passcode will be sent upon registration.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

WOMAN

From Page 1

Charley missing on Sept. 17.

As of yesterday, police had no updates on the whereabouts of Charley and are looking to members of the community to share any information they may have about the individual, Pangelinan said.

Saipan Tribune tried to reach out to family members of the missing individual but they declined to comment on the situation.

According to a DPS press statement, the department received a call at about 10:51am last Friday, Sept. 17, about a missing person in San Antonio. Police were immediately dispatched to the caller, who told police that his mother, Charley, had not been home since Sunday, Sept. 4.

The son mentioned that Charley came home sometime around 10pm that night and became upset with his siblings. Then, sometime around 11pm, Charley left the residence and hasn't returned home since.

According to Charley's son, she frequently leaves the residence but always returns home.

The family stated that Charley was last seen wearing a blue sweater and black skirt.

DPS is encouraging anyone who may know, or has any information on the whereabouts of Charley, to call 911. "Her safety is of utmost concern to the department and her family members," DPS stated.

SENATE

From Page 1

Hofschneider scheduled the emergency session at the Senate chamber at 2pm, during which the full Senate is expected to adopt the conference committee "product" on the budget bill.

House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), on the other hand, set a regular session this Thursday at 1:30pm, during which one of the items on the agenda is the conference committee's report.

The full Senate and House are expected to adopt during their respective sessions the conference committee's report that recommends for both chambers to pass the budget legislation, House Bill 22-74 in the form of HD3, SD1, Conference Committee Substitute 1.

The bicameral conference committee's meeting Friday afternoon lasted only two hours and 30 minutes. All six members of the committee voted for the adoption of their mutually agreed amendments in the budget legislation, paving the way for the Legislature to approve the $144.84-million spending plan.

Sen. Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota) is the chairperson of the Senate's conference committee, while Rep. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota) is the chairperson of the House's conference committee.

According to the conference committee's report, the conferees unanimously agreed to most of the amendments made by the Senate and primarily focused their deliberations on the Judicial Branch, Legislative Branch, other programs, outside sources, and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. subsidy.

After the full Senate and House adopt the conference committee's report, both chambers are expected to subsequently pass the budget bill. The bill will then be submitted to the table of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres for his signature before the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30, 2021. Without a budget for the new fiscal year, the CNMI government will be forced to have a partial shutdown.

From the $144,848,801 total identified budgetary resources for fiscal; year 2022, minus debt service, this leaves the government $98,897,301 that's available for appropriation. Including the $4,487,022 budget for the Department of Public Lands, the grand total revenue available for appropriation is $103,384,323.

Add to that the $175 million allocated to the CNMI in the American Rescue Plan Act, which means the lawmakers appropriated $278,384,323 in combined general local funds and ARPA funds for fiscal year 2022.

BOOST

From Page 1

Travel Bubble with Japan this December, said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres Friday.

When asked during his radio press briefing about the Marianas Visitors Authority's plan for the Japan Travel Bubble, Torres said he is happy that MVA is looking into such a program with Japan and that MVA is looking at launching that program in mid-December 2021 and into January 2022.

"I look forward to it. I do want to congratulate Japan as well for moving forward with their vaccination," he said, adding that he hopes to bring back Skymark Airlines, which he said they worked so hard to bring in but was unfortunately stopped because of COVID-19.

Torres is hoping that other Japanese airlines or even other international airlines will create a route from Japan to Saipan.

He also praised the work that the CNMI team has done to keep the community safe, including the work of Governor's Authorized Representative Patrick C. Guerrero, COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren Villagomez, and all the first responders, nurses, and doctors since Day 1.

"Our community listened and followed through because they believe in that leadership," he said.

The governor said out of over 250 positive cases in the CNMI, the last 60 positive cases have been identified in the last three weeks only because of the delta variant.

"I know how strict we are. And I think people understand that now and appreciate that, and not just them, but even other countries," he said.

Torres said other countries are also looking into the CNMI's protocols. "And this pandemic, it's a two-way thing. So we can be safe here. But until our partners are able to open up their quarantine site and increase their vaccination, or herd immunity, it's very difficult to have that conversation," the governor said.

He said it's critical to diversify the CNMI's tourism markets, and not just focus solely on Japan, Korea, and China. Torres said there is a need to venture out to Australia, perhaps even Vietnam, New Zealand, and Singapore.

He said diversifying the CNMI's tourism market is the only way for the CNMI to have a stronger foundation for economic stabilization.

With respect to the CNMI-South Korea Travel Bubble program, the governor said CNMI is the only destination that South Korea has ever signed a Travel Bubble with.

"That is a big thing," said Torres, noting that it's because South Korea trusts the CNMI's system and trusts the people that's running the protocols.

He said to have South Korea encourage their people to only come to the CNMI puts the CNMI not just in a better position, but also showcases Rota and Tinian.

VEGAS

From Page 2

18 months are not lost on us. We know that the community is hurting," he said.

In response to a committee members' questions, Jackson said he works for Bridge Capital and directly reports to the company's principals, John Baldwin and Shawn Scott.

He said MP Holdings LLC and Bridge Capital have no business relationship, but they have the same shareholders. He said Mariana Entertainment, which owns Club 88, is the subsidiary of MP Holdings LLC. He said MPL Holdings LLC has been profitable some years but not all, especially last year when the company lost millions.

As for Club 88 and its near-closure, Jackson said they actually shut down 20% of its operations.

He said the initial plan was to shut down Club 88 immediately, but when they sat down and looked at the numbers, they realized that they had already prepaid $100,000 in licensing fees earlier in the year.

He said Club 88 has 73 machines and those needed to be licensed on an annual basis so last August after the imposition of Saipan Local Law 22-6, seven of those machines became due for renewal. So the decision was made not to renew those seven machines and close them down, Jackson said. This month, another eight machines became due for renewal and those were also not renewed.

"The decision was made to close piecemeal," he said, emphasizing that they "absolutely did not try" to deceive the public when they first announced that Club 88 would be closed immediately.

In response to the questions of Gaming Committee vice chair Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan), Jackson said he is aware that Bridge Capital holds a qualifying certificate and that he knows the terms and conditions of that qualifying certificate. He said he is also aware that CNMI law prohibits qualifying certificate holders from having an interest or license on gaming.

Jackson said Bridge Capital or any of its principals are not in violation of the qualifying certificate because Bridge Capital, which is a holder of such certificate, has nothing to do with MP Holdings LLC.

He said he is not aware there been any comingling of funds in Bridge Capital and MP Holdings. "Accounts are separate. Books are separate. Everything is separate," he said. "Whether or not you might have a common pair of eyes reviewing financials certainly is no indication that there's any kind of overlap relative to this issue."

Propst said there was a complaint that the Saipan mayor was not informed of SLL 22-6l and that Jackson did not submit comments on the legislation. Propst cited how the Saipan Mayor's Office was informed about the bill and the process that led to the signing of the bill into law.

After consulting with their counsel, Michael Dotts, Jackson informed the committee that they are willing to disclose their financial record in a private meeting.

Propst thanked Jackson for coming and answering their questions.

"I do believe that it is unfortunate how everything came to be. The fact that there was a lawsuit and we also had to see an ethics complaint against one of our colleagues…was a bit surprising," Propst said, referring to MP Holdings LLC's and Mariana Entertainment LLC's lawsuit against the Department of Finance and ethics complaint against Rep. Ralph Yumul (R-Saipan) over the passing of the bill.

Propst said he just want to say that they are not here in bad faith and that they are not here to try to bring the company down. He said there was an opportunity to look at a revenue-generating bill and that he can assure that they did not have a sinister plot.

"So we will move forward through discussion and dialogue and we can do it amicably without any rancor or animosity. I hope we can continue forward in that direction," Propst told Jackson.

Some employees of Club 88 and Saipan Vegas were in the gallery of the House chamber during the meeting.

Jackson thanked Propst for the opportunity to meet as they believe in constructive conversation and discussion. "As I told you I've been here for 31 years. We all know that kind of challenges the CNMI is having now as a result of the pandemic and we want to be part of the solution," Jackson said.

Jackson is a former board member of the then-Marianas Visitors Bureau, which is now the Marianas Visitors Authority. He previously worked for Pacific Islands Club and DFS.

CPA

From Page 3

going on self-care leave. The executive director approves self-care leave for managers and staff attorneys. Denial of self-care leave must be for a good reason and may be a basis for an employee's grievance. The right to use self-care leave is contingent upon management's requirements. A manager is wholly within managerial rights to deny an employee's request for self-care leave, if that denial is based upon demands of the Commonwealth Ports Authority. If an employee's request to use self-care leave is denied, the manager and employee shall coordinate together and identify the next possible available date that the self-care leave may be used," the policy states.

CPA employees accrue eight hours of self-care leave on the first date of each quarter or upon the date the employee first becomes eligible to receive employee benefits.

Any self-care leave accrued shall expire at the end of the last day of the quarter that the self-care leave was accrued. Self-care leave quarters shall be from Jan. 1 to March 31, April 1 to June 30, July 1 to Sept. 30, and Oct. 1 to Dec. 31.

JKPL unveils LGBT+ book collection

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library staff, T-Project board and junior advisory board members, Sen. Vinnie Vinson F. Sablan, and Rep. Christina Sablan hold up last Saturday some of the books that are part of JKPL's new LGBT+ book collection. T-Project founder Tyra Sablan said that book collections for Tinian and Rota are in the works. JOSHUA SANTOS

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, in partnership with trans-led nonprofit organization T-Project, unveiled last Saturday a new LGBT+ book collection worth $2,500, featuring works for all ages, ranging from children's books to adult books about issues facing the LGBT+ community today.

Present for the unveiling last Saturday were T-Project's board and junior advisory board members, JKPL staff, and lawmakers Sen. Vinnie Vinson F. Sablan (R-Saipan) and Rep. Christina Sablan (D-Saipan).

Technical services librarian Beth Demapan said that, in addition to the book collection, T-Project will soon be sponsoring an essay contest and "Reading Challenge" at the library.

The "Reading Challenge" requires library patrons to read at least two works that are part of the LGBT+ collection. That will allow them to claim prizes.

Also, with the library celebrating its 30th anniversary this December, Demapan said that partnering up with T-Project is a welcome addition to the library's goal of promoting literacy.

"We're very excited that T-Project has partnered with the library, especially since we're also a safe haven for the LGBT+ community. We're thankful that they were able to donate around $2,500 worth of books for our community. …[The T-Project partnership and book collection] is a good component as the library celebrates 30 years of promoting literacy," said Demapan.

T-Project founder Tyra Sablan said the collection was months in the making and that she met with JKPL earlier this year to discuss having a book collection out ahead of LGBT History Month in October. Sablan said that JKPL was a safe space for her in her youth, and was more than happy to give back to the library. Similar book collections for Tinian and Rota are currently in the works, she said.

"We're really excited that we have the opportunity to be able to give back to the public library because as a kid I used to come here all the time. It was a safe space for me, and so I thought, 'Why not give back to the place that molded me?' We decided to create a space where parents, friends, allies, and people seeking to learn more about the LGBT+ community can find local resources that are tangible and free," said Sablan.

'Island Cuisine Night' showcases CNMI food

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As part of this year's events in celebration of Chamorro and Carolinian Cultural Heritage Month in September, the Carolinian Affairs Office held an "Island Cuisine Night" at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan last Friday to highlight the CNMI's culture through local delicacies.

Around 30-40 spectators were treated to live demonstrations of how to prepare *buñelos*, island-style *sukiyaki*, *katdun pika*, rice with coconut milk, and a live demonstration of how to harvest and make *tuba*, or juice from the bud of a coconut tree. After each demonstration and throughout the event, everyone present was treated to a spread of local dishes free of charge.

Carolinian Affairs Office executive assistant John Tagabuel said he was very pleased with the event's turnout, and thanked the Refaluwasch Advisory Council, the Office of the Governor, and the Marianas Visitors Authority for making the "Island Cuisine Night" possible.

Tagabuel added that MVA made a monetary donation to the CAO for the event "to make sure that we start something" ahead of the world returning to normalcy. In the future, Tagabuel expressed interest in holding more CAO-hosted events, and a larger-scale "Island Cuisine Night" once tourists begin again to visit the CNMI. Recently, MVA's board unanimously voted to adopt Cultural Heritage Month as an MVA signature event in hopes of promoting cultural tourism in the long-term.

Tagabuel hopes this recognition would entice tourists and the community to get involved with local culture and events hosted by the CAO and the Indigenous Affairs Office. Tagabuel also alluded to a "grand finale" event to cap this year's celebration of Cultural Heritage Month, with more details coming soon.

"We're trying to collaborate [with MVA] to make it a signature event and make it bigger. [We have an event] slated for Oct. 2, and we hope that more people can come out, especially our local people, to come and see what we still have, what we still try to preserve, and perpetuate our food, language, dances, music, and our art," said Tagabuel.

Vicenta Igisomar, left, prepares *buñelos* while Alice Romolor, second from right, prepares island-style sukiyaki in front of a small crowd during "Island Cuisine Night" at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan last Friday. At right is executive assistant for the Carolinian Affairs Office John Tagabuel. According to John Oliver "Bolis" Gonzales, sukiyaki—which is traditionally a Japanese dish served with soup in a hot pot—was introduced to the Marianas during the Japanese administration. Over time, sukiyaki in the Marianas evolved into a dry noodle dish, which more closely resembles Korean japchae or Filipino pancit. JOSHUA SANTOS

Robert Tenorio Torres, Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950
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Attorney for Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane for Claimant Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: GUADALUPE A. ATALIG Decedent.
Civil Action No. 20-0176 (R)
AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
Date: Sept. 30, 2021
Time: 10:00am
Judge: CAMACHO, JOSEPH

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND ANY HEIRS, OF THE LATE GUADALUPE A. ATALIG OR OF HER ESTATE:

AMENDED NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, **Merced M. Tomokane** for Creditor Bank of Guam of Saipan, CNMI ("Petitioner"), has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for Letter of Administration of the **Estate of Guadalupe A. Atalig, Decedent.** The attorney for Petitioner is **Robert T. Torres, Esq., whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950.**

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by **Merced M. Tomokane**, as Petitioner for Creditor Bank of Guam, is scheduled to be heard on **September 30, 2021 at 10:00am**, at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, *Guma' Hustisia*, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, or entities having claims against the Decedent or her estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of this publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to **ROBERT TENORIO TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.**

Dated this 13thth day of September, 2021

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk

Robert Tenorio Torres, Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859 | Fax. (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane for Claimant Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JOSEPH ULLOA ROSARIO Decedent.
Civil Action No. 20-0171 (R)
AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
Date: Sept. 30, 2021
Time: 10:00am
Judge: CAMACHO, JOSEPH

THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND ANY HEIRS, OF THE LATE JOSEPH ULLOA ROSARIO OR OF HIS ESTATE:

AMENDED NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, **Merced M. Tomokane** for Creditor Bank of Guam of Saipan, CNMI ("Petitioner"), has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for Letter of Administration of the **Estate of Joseph Ulloa Rosario, Decedent.** The attorney for Petitioner is **Robert T. Torres, Esq., whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950**.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by **Merced M. Tomokane**, as Petitioner for Creditor Bank of Guam, is scheduled to be heard on **September 30, 2021 at 10:00am**, at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guma' Hustisia, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, or entities having claims against the Decedent or her estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of this publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to **ROBERT TENORIO TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated**.

Dated this 10th day of September, 2021.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk

GUAM & COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WEBEX MEETING SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs
Honolulu Regional Office - Public Contact Team

Will host a Virtual Benefits Workshop for Veterans, Family Members, Surviving Spouses, and Community Providers
on
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

From
4PM-6PM (GUAM & CNMI LOCAL TIME)

To participate please join us in Cisco Webex by clicking or copying and pasting the below links into your browser:

**DOWNLOAD SLIDES at: https://www.benefits.va.gov/honolulu/

https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/j.php?MTID=m98a8e2d50979ba85eb20b523f636061d

You can join via Computer, Phone Audio (1-404-397-1596, 1998180202##), or Webex Mobile App. Meeting Password: mpK45vMm6m*

Benefits Workshop Topics:
Compensation, Pension, Education & Training, DIC, Survivor Benefits, Loan Guaranty, Veteran Readiness & Employment, Burial and Plot Internment Allowance, Burial Flags, & Insurance

NORTHERN MARIANAS PACIFIC MINI GAMES 2022

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Administrative Assistant
Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022

Job Description:
Northern Marinas Pacific Mini Games 2022 Organizing Committee wishes to recruit an Administrative Assistant to be responsible for administrative support of the NMPMG2022. The Administrative Assistant will be report directly to the CEO. Administrative Assistant is entry level role to the sports industry aimed sports management or other talent and experience in sport administration. You will need to build and maintain good relationship through your ability to deliver on time and with quality to Games Organizing Committees, other stakeholder groups such as Northern Marinas Sports Association (NMSA), Pacific Game Council (PGC) and National Federation.

Duties and Responsibilities:
Administrative Assistant must have experience organizational administration that will serve games organizing committee:
- First point of contact to provide administrative support to the NMPMG2022 events and Games Organizing Committee (GOC)
- Arrange logistics and detailed running sheets for NMPMG2022 events in conjunction with other staff and stakeholders.
- Monitor NMPMG2022 digital platforms to ensure accuracy and currency of information
- Ensure effective management of electronic files, database and other digital content
- Support CEO in development and reporting framework for NMPMG2022 events and activities
- Conduct specific research tasks as required

Administrative Assistant should possess the following essential qualities:
- You need to demonstrate Project Management experience suitable to arranging meetings or small events; or have Project Management theory and how you would practically apply it in this setting.
- Computer literacy is essential including MS Office suite along with an aptitude in learning other specific industry or commercial software.
- You need to know the principles of sports event for NMPMG2022
- You need to understand the principles of how sports competition includes National and International Federation.
- Excellent time management and organizational ability
- Ability to multitask and meet constant deadlines
- Willingness to work long hours, when necessary

Personal Attributes:
- You must have excellent verbal and written communication skills with an ability to relate to a wide range of people from different age and cultural backgrounds
- You must be capable of working within a small team or independently
- Being proactive with the ability to solve problems, work under pressure and meet deadlines is necessary to succeed in the role
- You must be reliable, have a good work ethic and be able to keep progressing things even when it's still ambiguous

Hours of Work:
This is a full-time position (36 hours weekly) with an occasional requirement to work outside of normal office hours.

Salary: $12.00 per hour (Oct. 2021-July 2022)

Language: Fluency in English; Chamorro and or Carolinian an advantage

How to Apply:
If you meet the above requirement and are interested in the position, please send a resume or curriculum vitae along with a cover letter to the following postal or email address:

POSTAL MAIL: Administrative Assistant NMPMG2022 Application
P.O. Box 502476, Saipan, MP 96950

EMAIL: vicente.babauta@gmail.com or marianassports@gmail.com

All application must be received no later than 5:00pm, September 24, 2021.

Contact Person:
Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022, GOC Chairman Marco Peter
Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022, CEO Vicente "Ben" Babauta

CUC chief to testify today before JGO

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Gary P. Camacho is expected to testify today, Tuesday, before the House Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee.

JGO Committee chair Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) confirmed yesterday that they subpoenaed Camacho to testify at 10am, but that she does not know if the CUC executive director is show up with a lawyer.

Babauta said she does not anticipate Camacho needing an interpreter as he doesn't speak Chamorro fluently.

The committee is investigating Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' expenditures of public funds and travels.

Committee members are expected to ask, among other issues, about Torres' power and water utility billings.

At his closing statements during his appearance before the JGO last Wednesday, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said he cannot answer some questions, among them how 235,000 gallons of water were used within one month at the governor's residence. Utilities at the governor's residence are paid using public funds. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Updates on water outages in some Saipan areas

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. would like to update the public on the emergency water service interruption that occurred on Sept. 12, for customers in the Kagman, Papago, San Vicente, Upper Dandan Homestead, Obyan and Naftan areas.

As of Sept. 16, water services have been restored to the Papago, San Vicente, Upper Dandan Homestead, Naftali and Obyan area. However, due to the increase with the water demand in the Dandan Homestead area, the following water service hours will be in effect:

■ Kagman 3 and Kagman 3 Phase 4 —Currently online but was scheduled to shut-off last night at 7pm until this morning, Sept. 21, at 6am;

■ Papagoi San Vicente, Dandan Homestead (High Elevation)—Currently online.

■ Dandan Homestead (Lower Elevation across the Dandan Middle School)—Water services were shut-off yesterday from 12pm to 5pm. The higher elevation area of the Dandan Homestead remained online.

■ Naftan and Obyan—Water services will be the same as the Dandan Homestead lower elevation areas.

In order to provide limited water supply to the Dandan Homestead customers, CUC will be distributing water at the following site:

■ The two water tankers owned by the Saipan Mayor's Office will be available at the San Vicente Youth Center for customers to fill up their gallons. Customers are welcome to retrieve water at this location. Note that the water is non-potable. ***(PR)***

American Samoa reports first case of coronavirus

PAGO PAGO, AMERICAN SAMOA—American Samoa reported its first case of coronavirus on Friday.

The U.S. territory's acting governor and health officials said the islands' first case of COVID-19 was of a resident who returned to America Samoa from Hawaii this week.

The infected traveler flew in on Monday, the first day of newly resumed commercial flights from Honolulu to Pago Pago. The route had been suspended since March 2020.

Officials say the resident was fully vaccinated and had traveled to Hawaii and the U.S. mainland. They say the traveler tested negative for COVID-19 before boarding the flight back to American Samoa.

American Samoa requires all travelers to be vaccinated and to quarantine. ***(AP)***

UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold a Special Meeting on September 24, 2021 from 9:00am to 11:30pm at Saipan World Resort – Sunflower Hall.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review & Adoption of Agenda of September 24, 2021
IV. Action Items
- **a. Review and Approve the Proposed 2022-2026 DD Basic Grant State Plan Goals & Objectives (FY2022 & FY2023 Work Plans)**
- **b. Ratify the Approval of the Updated CDD & AT Program Logos**

V. New Business
- **a. Saipan First Responder Training Update**
- **b. Meet Your Policymaker Event**
- **c. 2021 NDEAM Activities**
- **d. CNMI-UCEDD Community Needs Assessment**
- **e. Disability Network/Tri-Agency Logo**
- **f. Disability Network Partners Logo**

VI. Miscellaneous
VII. Next Meeting
VIII. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Robert Mendiola
Chairperson

This ad was paid for by funds from the DD Basic Grant Part A (Administrative)

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com •
Website: www.cnmiports.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 04-2021

Opening date: September 20, 2021 Closing date: October 08, 2021

Positions: (1) Receptionist/Secretary (Saipan)
(1) Custodial/Maintenance-I (CPA Rota)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, October 08, 2021.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

NMI joins annual international coastal cleanup

Community volunteers on Saipan clean up Micro Beach early morning Saturday, Sept. 18, for the 2021 International Coastal Cleanup celebration.

IVA MAURIN

By IVA MAURIN
CORRESPONDENT

McDonald's Saipan employees and officials participate in last Saturday's International Coastal Cleanup. The company always volunteers for the ICC every year.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Community volunteers from all over the CNMI spent their morning last Saturday, Sept. 18, to "connect and collect"—to come together for the 2021 International Coastal Cleanup celebration, organized globally by Ocean Conservancy and here on island by the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality.

For more than 35 years, communities all over the world have been coming together to pick up trash, and collect data on the types of trash collected, which then helps scientists and researchers to find ways to mitigate and solve the world's trash problem. For this year, the theme was "Connect and Collect."

In an interview with Saipan Tribune, BECQ's Coastal Resources Management acting director Rich Salas thanked all the participants for the great turnout, adding that they hope to see the ICC continue and keep gaining momentum.

"BECQ reached out to community members to adopt certain portions of the island to conduct beach cleanups and we record all the data and submit that to the Ocean Conservancy so that we can record what is being collected from our coastlines internationally," he added.

"At the end of the day, it's all about promoting stewardship, and being more mindful of our community and our resources here, because our resources are vital to our existence."

When asked if there is anything he would ask legislators to help with the island's trash problem, Salas said it would be for more services to be provided to supplement the solid waste management industry, in order for the community to have access to more resources that can help them manage wastes properly.

Last April, Reps. Richard Lizama (D-Saipan) and Leila Staffler (D-Saipan) initiated a household trash dropoff in Kagman to help the residents easily throw their trash, particularly those who find it hard to get to the Transfer Station in Lower Base, or at the Marpi Landfill. The dropoff program, according to Staffler, showed how much waste transfer stations are needed in the area.

CRM is still processing data for this year's ICC. However, data collected from last year's coastal cleanup showed cigarette butts as the most collected trash, followed by plastic bottle caps, and beverage cans.

Aside from the International Cleanup, BECQ also holds beach cleanups every first Saturday of every month via their Cleanup Brigade. For more information, contact them at 664-8500/1.

Triple J Saipan executives, management, staff and their friends and family join in the island's efforts this past Saturday for the 2021 International Coastal cleanup. The route for the group started behind Sandy Beach Homes and along the beach front past Surf Club Restaurant.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXI, Issue No. 187
Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Biden administration must answer questions about Kabul drone strike that killed family

The suicide bombings that ripped through Kabul's airport in late August and killed 13 U.S. troops and more than 160 Afghans upped the ante for the U.S. to thwart more terrorist attacks in the final days of its withdrawal.

The Biden administration said it prevented another suicide bombing a few days later with a drone strike that officials said killed a suspected Islamic State group driver and an associate near the airport. U.S. officials told reporters that the target had been under surveillance for hours and that people were seen loading explosives into the trunk of his car.

But two separate investigations by The New York Times and The Washington Post cast doubt on that narrative. These news reports must elicit a fuller explanation than what the Biden administration has offered so far.

Relatives and co-workers of the target, engineer Zemari Ahmadi, told journalists that he was an aid worker with a California-based nonprofit in Afghanistan. Video obtained by The Times shows Ahmadi and a colleague loading canisters of water into his trunk to bring to his family on the day he was killed.

Ahmadi's family members said 10 people were killed, including seven children. The relatives showed reporters photos of burned bodies belonging to children, and neighbors confirmed that children's bodies were removed from the site.

The Biden administration must conduct a thorough investigation.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday that the administration is looking at the matter "very, very, very carefully." However, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters that while officials are investigating, he's not aware of a plan to put investigators on the ground in Kabul. If two American newspapers can check out information on the ground, why can't the U.S. government?

We hope the Biden administration follows through on its word to be transparent about its findings. Without troops in Afghanistan, the U.S. will have to rely even more on drone technology to hit terrorists. A strike on the family of an aid worker who may not have done anything wrong should prompt our military to seriously examine its drone policies and decisions.

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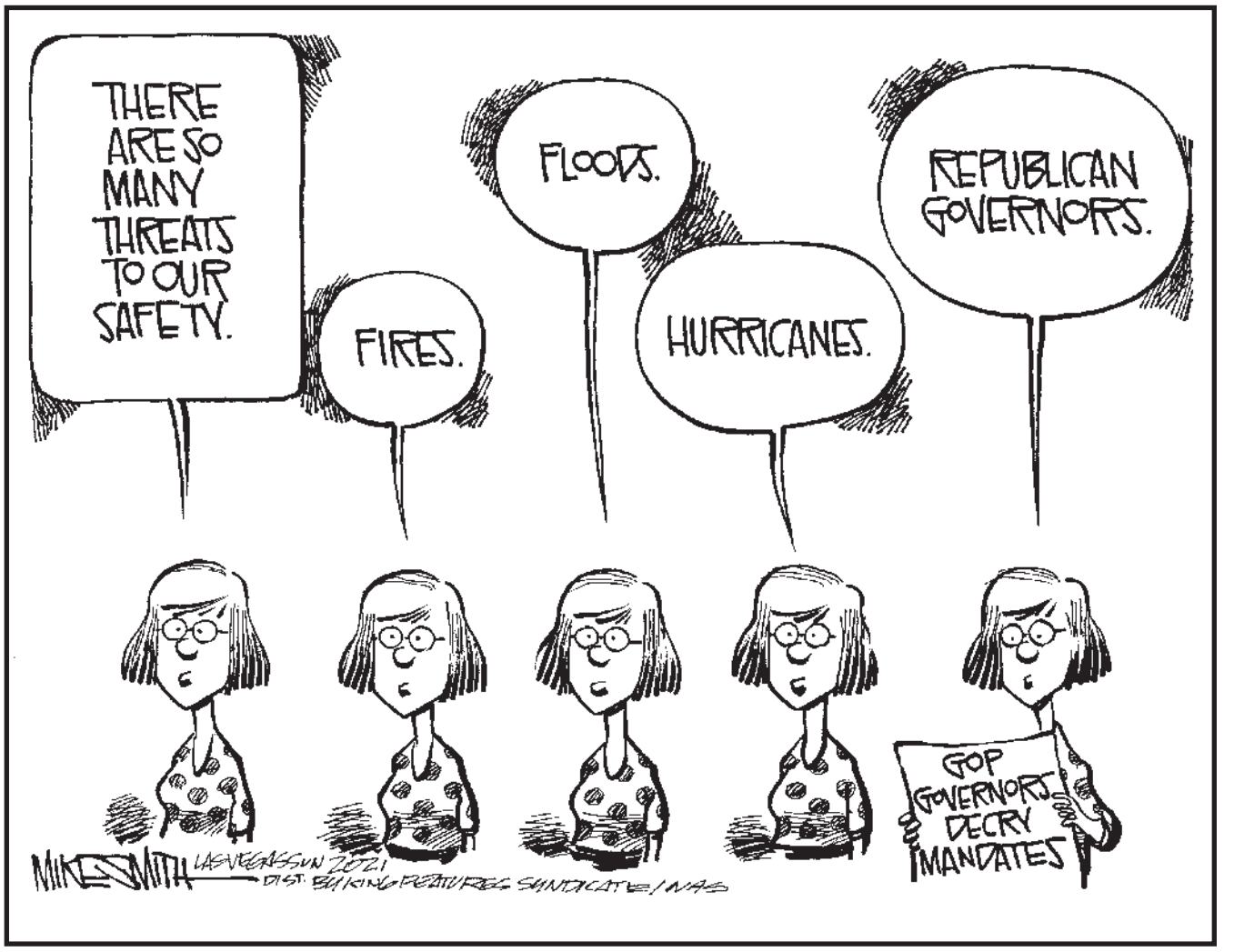


Facebook is too secretive. Its oversight board should change that

By PARMY OLSON
Bloomberg Opinion

Parmy Olson is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist covering technology. She previously reported for the* Wall Street Journal *and* Forbes *and is the author of* We Are Anonymous.

Boards are notorious for group think and spinelessness. In Facebook's case, a board could make a difference.

Documents reported by The Wall Street Journal earlier this week revealed a secret system at Facebook to coddle the posts of politicians and celebrities, as well as internal stats on the full extent of psychological harm that Instagram causes teen girls. Both issues were long suspected. Both are now backed by startling evidence.

What they boil down to is this: Facebook, like the oil and tobacco companies of years ago, has been far too secretive about the impact of its products on human life.

When U.S. senators asked Facebook last month about Instagram's impact on teen mental health, the company did not answer. The reason is likely because its internal stats looked so bad: A third of teenage girls who already felt negatively about their bodies felt worse when they went on Instagram, according to The Journal's reporting, which cited documents from a person seeking federal whistleblower protection. Facebook has also deflected public questioning of XCheck, the internal system that allowed more than 5 million elite users like celebrities and politicians to skirt Facebook's content rules.

On the one hand, Facebook could see this as just another PR nightmare that will eventually blow over, barely denting its growth in users and revenue. After all, with regulators focused on Facebook's corporate behavior and governments on social media more broadly, who will actually do anything about Facebook's chronic secrecy? One party could be Facebook's Oversight Board.

This is the 20-member panel of academics, former politicians and activists that Facebook founded in 2019 to help make it more accountable for the way it moderates content on the site, in a unique experiment in corporate governance. Sometimes described as a Supreme Court of Facebook, the board reviews the site's higher-profile rulings on content, such as the decision to indefinitely ban former President Donald Trump, which the board overturned and openly criticized. Noah Feldman, a contributing columnist for Bloomberg Opinion, is an adviser to Facebook and helped set up the board.

If you have already heard of the Oversight Board, you've likely read the unflattering assessments, too. Skeptics say it is largely toothless, since Facebook funds its six-year, $130 million budget and the salaries of its members, reportedly in the six figures. And while it has overturned more of Facebook's decisions than not, it only looks at individual cases, when it should arguably be scrutinizing Facebook on bigger issues like its potentially-harmful recommendation algorithms.

But it is also no shrinking violet. Within hours of The Wall Street Journal's story about elite users going online, the board posted: "The Board has repeatedly made recommendations that Facebook be far more transparent in general…"

You can almost hear the frustration.

I'm eager to see what the Oversight Board does next. In the coming weeks it is scheduled to publish its first ever "transparency report" into Facebook, according to an Oversight Board spokesman. It will be the first of a series of quarterly reviews aimed at shining a light on how diligently Facebook has been following the board's recommendations for each case. And many of the 70 recommendations the board has made to Facebook until now focused on transparency.

Armed with the latest revelations about Facebook's XCheck system and its studies on teens, the board's upcoming report could be a golden opportunity to put its foot down. Its members could, if they truly want to make a mark, threaten to quit if Facebook doesn't divulge the information that they are demanding.

The board's big problem until now is that its recommendations are not legally binding (only its rulings are). But a senior board administrator recently told me that those same recommendations could, in theory, change the way Facebook's algorithms are designed to handle content. The board now has a chance to push for Facebook to make those changes. The revelations about the company's internal policies, and renewed pressure from politicians, should give it some extra leverage.

It's worth noting the structural changes happening in the coming months: The board is working on adding 20 new members to swell its ranks to 40. Here's hoping they bring on a few rabble rousers.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Covering the fog of peace

By MARTIN SCHRAM
Tribune News Service

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service*, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.*

Ever since America's mushroom clouds rose over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, generals whose fingers are always on the buttons have slept with their private nightmare and lived every waking hour determined to never let their bad dreams come true.

In showdowns, especially showdowns between nuclear nations, miscalculations can—and will—happen. It is not something generals talk about. But it is always there. And it has been known to bond opposing generals.

Today we will be reflecting upon the way seemingly unlikely friendships sometimes bond generals who, in history books, will appear to be steely adversaries. And how those general friendships sometimes ease superpowers away from war and into a coexistence that looks a lot like peace.

But first, we need to dispose of a little old business that pops up, now and then, here at the intersection of the news media, policy and politics.

Namely: There are secrets and then there are secrets. In journalism today, just because something was reported to be "secret," doesn't mean it wasn't widely known about. Today, when something is labeled "secret" in a news leak, it mainly means it will get mega-more hits online than if the little scoop is just shoveled out there all by its lonesome, fact-filled self.

So it was the other day, when we all saw the scoop that breathlessly wallpapered all news screens with the revelation that the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Mark Milley, made two "secret" phone calls, in October and January, to his counterpart in China, People's Liberation Army Gen. Li Zuocheng. Both times, America's top general assured China's top general that President Donald Trump wasn't going to militarily attack China. Milley's words appeared in direct quotations, gleaned from transcripts, in a new book, "Peril," by Washington Post's Robert Woodward and Robert Costa.

But just to put all nuances in context, this wasn't a case of a rogue general contacting his adversary and keeping it secret from his colleagues. Milley's calls were part of a multi-level Pentagon effort, initiated by the office of Defense Secretary Mark Esper. The calls were reportedly staffed, notated and shared within national security channels. The Pentagon's civilian and military leaders had learned from U.S. intelligence that China's leaders were convinced by their flawed intelligence that President Donald Trump was about to militarily attack China. Worse yet, the Pentagon's leaders believed President Xi Jinping might launch a preemptive strike against America—igniting a war based on a miscalculation.

After Trump's reelection defeat, China's fears escalated as Trump's instability and desperation worsened. Then, after the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection, Pentagon officials feared Trump might launch a wag-the-dog military strike, hoping to postpone or cancel Joe Biden's Inauguration Day.

In an act of patriotism and courage, Milley convened the joint chiefs and all signed a document calling the "violent riot" a "direct assault" on the U.S. government and Constitution. "To our men and women deployed and at home, safeguarding our country—stay ready, keep your eyes on the horizon, and remain focused on the mission."

And on Jan. 8, Milley, desperate to save his country and prevent a war of miscalculation, called Li and said something we never heard a U.S. general tell an adversary: "General Li, you and I have known each other for now five years. If we're going to attack, I'm going to call you ahead of time. It's not going to be a surprise."

Peace, or at least an absence of war, happened.

Sometimes even generals who are nuclear adversaries slide into a friendship that catches both by surprise. Shortly after the attacks of 9/11, while reporting for a book and PBS documentary titled "Avoiding Armageddon," I talked with Russia's Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev, who formerly commanded Russia's nuclear forces, about the day he and U.S. Gen. Eugene Habiger, former commander-in-chief of the U.S. Strategic Command, became, well, good friends.

Habiger invited Sergeyev to Middle America, escorted his Russian guest to the top of the top-secret U.S. Minuteman III platform, and showed him precisely how warheads were deployed on the missile. It was the first time a Russian general had ever seen an operational U.S. missile. "I saw many things in common between us," Sergeyev said.

Generals know all too well the nightmare of miscalculation—especially nuclear miscalculation. But they rarely talk about it. Once, retired Pakistani Brig. Gen. Feroz Khan, a former battlefield commander, spoke candidly with me about how "the danger of inadvertence" can lead a general to mistakenly order a first use of a nuclear weapon.

"Once the conventional war breaks out, the fog of war sets in," the general said. "…You have deceptions. You have misperceptions. You have communications breakdowns. …I can assure you that every general officer … anywhere in the world, would really understand what I am talking about."

There's more to 'Build Back Better' than its price tag

By JACKIE CALMES
Los Angeles Times

Jackie Calmes is an opinion columnist for the Los Angeles Times *in Washington, D.C.*

I've created a drinking game for watching TV news. It seems the hosts and pundits can't talk about Democrats' $3.5 trillion agenda for expanding health care, mitigating climate change and investing in housing, education and workers without using the word "massive," with extra emphasis on the first syllable.

"Democrats' MAS-sive $3.5-trillion proposal." Drink!

The M word suggests fiscal irresponsibility, as though President Joe Biden's "Build Back Better" plan of spending programs and tax cuts were simply reckless. No matter what you think of the program (I think it's long overdue), perspective is essential. The media often leave it out. And Democrats, rarely good at political messaging, aren't countering effectively, letting the implication of profligacy go unchallenged.

So it was notable when the president, during two stops in California on Monday to survey wildfire damage and support Gov. Gavin Newsom against the recall attempt, actually offered two main points of perspective about the sum he and most congressional Democrats want to invest in the nation's physical and human capital.

First, the programs would be spread over a decade, making the cost roughly $350 billion annually on average—still a lot, but not $3.5 trillion in a single year, as one could easily imagine from most news coverage of the price tag. Second, that multitrillion-dollar total is a pittance relative to the 10-year projections of the nation's growing economic output, according to public and some private forecasts.

As Biden put it during his swing through California, that's about "five-tenths of 1% of the entire GDP."

"Thinking small is a prescription for disaster," he added.

Biden's message still needs work. In two appearances, he used slightly different figures to describe the economy's projected growth, the percentage relative to that growth that his agenda would represent, and how much of his package would be "paid for" with offsetting savings and tax increases on the wealthy and corporations. (He first claimed all of it would be paid for, then 90%. Most likely, if Congress passes his plan, it will be smaller than $3.5 trillion, given moderate Democrats' objections, and the savings and new revenue won't cover the full cost, given Democrats' splits on the tax proposals.)

The president and his supporters could better use some other data points to put the massive (drink!) $3.5 trillion figure in perspective. Cite the potential for economic growth as a result of investment in both physical and social infrastructure. Compare the plan to the tax cuts that President Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress enacted in late 2017. And look at the actual pieces of the $3.5 trillion package, which tend to get overlooked amid attention to the bottom line.

While impossible to calculate precisely, economic growth would significantly offset the package's cost. Congressional Democrats haven't filled in the details, let alone agreed to them, and certainly some spending could be wasteful. Yet economic studies have shown taxpayers generally get more bang for the buck from public investments like infrastructure spending, nutrition programs and direct assistance to workers than from corporate tax cuts.

Economists at Moody's Analytics wrote that the Democratic package, together with the smaller, bipartisan infrastructure bill providing about $600 billion for roadways, water projects, mass transit and more, "will strengthen long-term economic growth, the benefits of which would mostly accrue to lower- and middle-income Americans." The plans would allay the economic consequences of climate change and "lift productivity and labor force growth."

Contradicting a main Republican talking point, Moody's said speculation that the plan would ignite inflation and overheat the economy is "overdone." Instead, "The fiscal support it provides is only sufficient to push the economy back to full employment from the recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Now contrast the focus on the bigger bill's $3.5 trillion price tag with the labeling of the Republican tax cuts during the 2017 debate. Those were described as a $1.5 trillion package, but that was a net figure—after subtracting for spending cuts and tax increases in the mix. The gross figure for those tax cuts was about $5.5 trillion, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. If the same math were applied to Biden's plan, its cost would be appreciably less than the gross figure of $3.5 trillion. Also, contrary to Trump and Republicans' claims, the tax cuts did not spur growth after the economy's initial sugar high.

And finally, try to see the trees in that $3.5 trillion forest. Republicans focus on the (get ready to drink!) "massive, reckless taxing and spending spree," as Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky called it this week. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi does try to get to the particulars, most of which are hugely popular in polls: "Where would you cut? Childcare? Family medical leave paid for? Universal pre-K? Home health care?"

In time for Biden's California trip, the White House highlighted some other potential gains for the state, including the extension of a child tax credit benefiting 7.8 million children, for an estimated 34% reduction in child poverty, and expansion of Pell Grants for 945,000 Californians in college. Biden underscored others: money for wildfire mitigation projects, clean energy subsidies, affordable housing construction and more.

Is $3.5 trillion massive? So are the nation's needs.

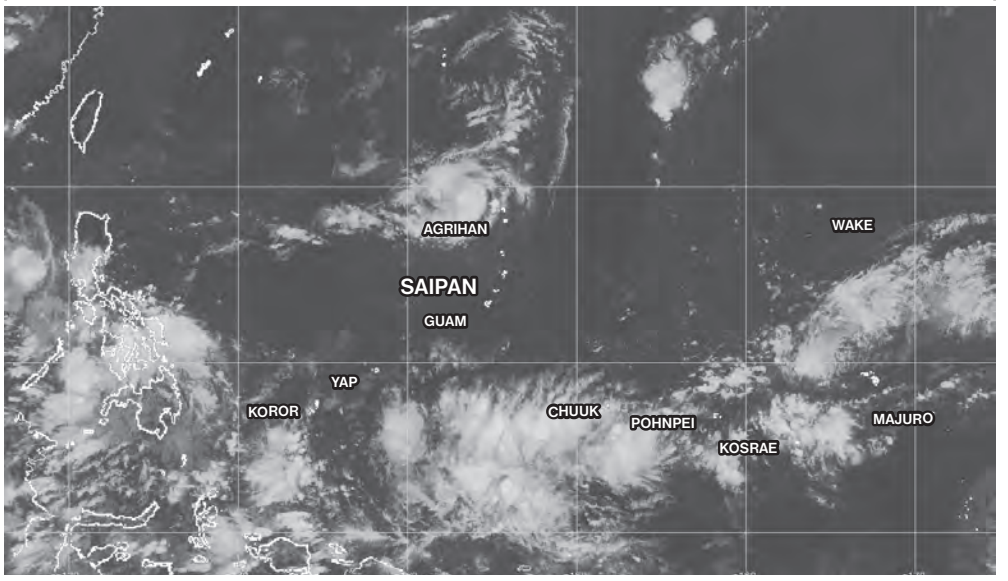
As Biden said in California, "We can't afford not to do it."

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly sunny with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
87° 78°	87° 78°	87° 78°	87° 78°	87° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:53 AM, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Skies are mostly clear this morning across the region, with light northeast winds and only a few sprinkles. Seas are around 3 feet at the Ipan buoy, but total seas range between 3 and 5 feet across the coastal waters.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Morning clouds	80 / 89 °F
Palau	Partly sunny	80 / 86 °F
Yap	Mostly cloudy	77 / 89 °F
Chuuk	Mostly cloudy	78 / 87 °F
Pohnpei	Partly cloudy	76 / 86 °F
Kosrae	Afternoon clouds	82 / 87 °F
Majuro	Mostly cloudy	83 / 87 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:05 AM	6:14 PM
Wednesday	6:06 AM	6:13 PM
Thursday	6:06 AM	6:12 PM
Friday	6:06 AM	6:11 PM
Saturday	6:06 AM	6:11 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:03 AM	6:36 PM
Wednesday	-	6:53 AM	7:12 PM
Thursday	-	7:42 AM	7:48 PM
Friday	-	8:30 AM	8:25 PM
Saturday	-	9:19 AM	9:04 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly cloudy	46 / 53 °F
Beijing	Partly cloudy	60 / 88 °F
Hong Kong	Mostly cloudy	80 / 85 °F
Honolulu	Mostly sunny	74 / 83 °F
London	Morning clouds	61 / 73 °F
Los Angeles	Morning clouds	64 / 78 °F
Manila	Partly sunny	80 / 94 °F
Melbourne	Afternoon clouds	59 / 70 °F
Miami	Partly sunny	79 / 87 °F
New York	Mostly sunny	71 / 89 °F
Osaka	Mostly cloudy	73 / 85 °F
Paris	Partly cloudy	57 / 79 °F
Pusan	Partly cloudy	71 / 83 °F
Rome	Morning clouds	61 / 84 °F
Salem	Mostly sunny	54 / 77 °F
San Francisco	Morning clouds	57 / 69 °F
Seoul	Mostly cloudy	66 / 83 °F
Tokyo	Heavy rain	76 / 82 °F
Washington, DC	Mostly sunny	73 / 93 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:59 AM	Low Tide	0.71
7:29 AM	High Tide	1.91
2:07 PM	Low Tide	0.22
8:17 PM	High Tide	1.90

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:45am	7:25am	1, 3, 6
UA117	9:45am	10:25am	2, 4, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	7:05pm	8:50pm	2, 5
UA183	7:25pm	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:45am	9:10pm	1, 3, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:45am	8:50pm	2, 5 via Guam
UA117/183	9:45am	9:10pm	4, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	3
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:00am	5:41am	1, 3, 6
UA174	8:00am	8:41am	2, 4, 5, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	9:50pm	3:55am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:25pm	4:30am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	9:50pm	5:41am+1	2, 5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:25pm	5:41am+1	7 via Guam
UA184/174	10:25pm	8:41am+1	1, 3, 4, 6 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	3
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Democrats push to retool health care programs for millions

WASHINGTON (AP)—Dental work for seniors on Medicare. An end to sky's-the-limit pricing on prescription drugs. New options for long-term care at home. Coverage for low-income people locked out of Medicaid by ideological battles.

Those are just some of the changes to health care that Democrats want to achieve with President Joe Biden's massive "Build Back Better" plan. The $3.5 trillion domestic agenda bill touches almost all aspects of American life, from taxes to climate change, but the health care components are a cornerstone for Democrats, amplified during the COVID-19 crisis.

For the nearly 145 million Americans covered by government health programs, along with their families and communities, the investment in the nation's services could make a difference in the quality of life for decades.

"It's a holistic look at how health care can be not just expanded, but better directed to the needs that people actually have," Kathleen Sebelius, federal health secretary under President Barack Obama, said of the Biden bill. "You've got a plan that's really aimed at the serious gaps in health care that are still causing people to either go totally uninsured, or run out of money in the course of their treatments."

But Democrats can only succeed if they bridge divisions among themselves. Don't look for Republicans to help.

With Medicare's long-term finances under a cloud, Republicans say now is not the time to add new benefits. They are planning to oppose not just the health care provisions, but the entire Biden package, voting lockstep against it as too big, costly and a slide toward "socialism."

Mindful of the politics ahead, Democrats are assembling the package with their slim hold on Congress. Instead of launching new experiments that many progressives prefer, they have chosen to plow more resources into existing programs, from Medicare and Medicaid enacted during the Great Society to the Obama-era Affordable Care Act.

In this Sept. 1, 2021, file photo, a police officer checks a passenger's phone at Porta Garibaldi train station, in Milan, Italy. AP

It's a compromise, of sorts, led by Biden's approach, paid for by taxes on corporations and the wealthy, those earning more than $400,000, as well as savings on prescription drug prices paid by the government to the pharmaceutical companies.

"I've said many times before: I believe we're at an inflection point in this country—one of those moments where the decisions we're about to make can change—literally change—the trajectory of our nation for years and possibly decades to come," Biden said in remarks last week at the White House.

Polling has shown that core health care provisions appeal to voters across political lines. Many Republican voters, for example, generally approve of Medicare negotiating prescription drug prices, even if GOP lawmakers do not. While the Obama health law focused mainly on helping uninsured working-age people and their families, Biden's coda puts a big emphasis on older people, who also happen to be reliable midterm election voters.

Major health care provisions in the mix include:

■ Authorizing Medicare to negotiate prices for the costliest drugs, including insulin. Private insurers and employer plans could then access those lower prices. Annual price increases for established drugs would be limited. Seniors' out-of-pocket costs would be capped.

A RAND Corporation study finds such an approach could cut U.S. spending on top drugs by half.

Sharp opposition from the big pharmaceutical companies and key business industry groups have left Democrats divided over the structure of the program.

Four House Democrats opposed the measure during committee votes this past week, enough to tank the entire bill. In the past, they had supported giving Medicare authority to negotiate, but they are expressing a range of concerns about the scope of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's plan. The Senate could take a somewhat different approach.

Medicare negotiating authority is the linchpin of the health care package because expected savings would be used to provide new benefits.

■ Expanding Medicare to cover dental care, vision, and hearing aids for seniors. This provision, championed by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., has been a long time coming. Vision care would begin the latter part of next year and hearing aids in 2023, but in an apparent concession to costs, dental coverage would not start until 2028.

Taiwan's FM condemns 'hostile' fruit import ban from China

BEIJING (AP)—Taiwan's foreign minister said Sunday that a new tropical fruit import ban by China was a "hostile move", amid souring relations between the two governments.

Chinese customs authorities announced earlier Saturday that they would stop the import of custard and wax apples from Taiwan, citing pest concerns.

"Following a series of military threats, the #PRC is weaponizing trade by announcing an immediate ban on #Taiwan's custard & wax apples," Taiwanese foreign minister Joseph Wu said on Twitter, referring to the mainland People's Republic of China by its common acronym.

He added that the trade ban was a "hostile move" that violates international trade norms.

China has recently hardened its stance toward Taiwan, which it views as a renegade province that should be united with the mainland.

The Chinese General Administration of Customs said in its statement that it detected pests called Planococcus minor—commonly known as the citrus mealybug—in imports of Taiwanese custard and wax apples.

The statement said that suspending the import of the two fruits was "to prevent the risk of plant epidemics."

In this file photo taken Friday, April 15, 2005, a woman picks "lien wu" or wax apple, a Taiwanese tropical fruit, at a local fruit market in Taipei, Taiwan. AP

The mealybugs tend to feed on a wide variety of agricultural crops and may affect yield and fruit quality.

In a news conference Sunday, Taiwan's agriculture minister Chen Chi-chung said that Taiwanese authorities have urged Beijing to provide scientific evidence for its ban.

"We cannot accept this," said Chen.

If China does not respond to Taiwan's request for a resolution under the current bilateral framework by Sept. 30, Taiwan will take the issue to the World Trade Organization for dispute resolution, Chen said.

China is the largest importer of Taiwan's agricultural products, and imported over $1 billion worth of agricultural goods last year, according to government data.

China in February banned imports of pineapples from Taiwan over similar concerns, and Taiwan at the time also protested what it said was a violation of global trade rules. Since the ban, Taiwan's pineapple exports to Japan have surged more than eightfold.

Chinese relations with Taiwan have soured since the election of Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, who is from the ruling Democratic Progressive Party which advocates Taiwan's formal independence.

Beijing has cut ties with Tsai's government over her refusal to accept its demand that she recognize the island as a part of China to be unified with it eventually under the "one country, two systems" policy enacted in Hong Kong.

Same goal, different paths: US, EU seek max vaccine rates

BRUSSELS (AP)—The Belgian town of Aarschot has a vaccination rate of 94% of all adults, but Mayor Gwendolyn Rutten worries her town is too close for comfort to the capital of Brussels, where the rate stands at 63%. But there's not much she can do about it.

Her hope is that the government mandates vaccination. "Otherwise, you drag all others back into danger," Rutten said in a recent interview.

But few European Union countries have issued outright mandates, instead requiring people to show proof of immunization, a negative test or recent recovery from COVID-19 to participate in ever more activities—even sometimes to go to work.

More sweeping requirements are the order of the day in the U.S., which has faced significant vaccine resistance. President Biden announced mandates last week that cover large portions of the population, sometimes without any option to test instead.

Despite apparently divergent strategies, officials in both the U.S. and the EU are struggling with the same question: how to boost vaccination rates to the max and end a pandemic that has repeatedly thwarted efforts to control it.

And the apparent split may in fact be narrowing. While not calling their restrictions mandates, some European countries are making life so difficult for those without the vaccine that it may amount to the same thing.

In a perhaps surprising move in a country known for touting individual freedoms, Biden has imposed sweeping vaccine requirements for as many as 100 million Americans, including many private-sector employees and health care workers. Employees at firms with more than 100 workers will need to get immunized or test weekly, while vaccination will be required for employees of the executive branch and contractors who do business with the federal government—with no option to test out. There are some exemptions.

The seemingly more aggressive U.S. policy may reflect greater pressures there. The EU, which initially lagged way behind the United States in terms of vaccinations, surpassed it at the end of July. As of Thursday, the 27-nation bloc had 60% of its population vaccinated compared to 53% for the United States, according to Our World In Data. In the both places, immunization rates vary widely from country to country or state to state.

American authorities from Biden on down have labeled the current phase a "pandemic of the unvaccinated," with data showing that nearly all COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. are now are in people who weren't vaccinated. EU officials have used the same description for continuing outbreaks in their countries.

But it's harder for the EU writ large to impose vaccine mandates since health policies are the responsibility of the 27 national governments, and top EU officials walk on egg shells addressing the issue. Asked specifically by The Associated Press whether mandatory vaccination could be part of the solution, three EU commissioners swerved around the question, though none argued against it.

Nation

US panel backs COVID-19 boosters only for seniors, high-risk

WASHINGTON (AP)—Dealing the White House a stinging setback, a government advisory panel overwhelmingly rejected a plan Friday to give Pfizer COVID-19 booster shots across the board, and instead endorsed the extra vaccine dose only for those who are 65 or older or run a high risk of severe disease.

The twin votes represented a heavy blow to the Biden administration's sweeping effort, announced a month ago, to shore up nearly all Americans' protection amid the spread of the highly contagious delta variant.

The nonbinding recommendation—from an influential committee of outside experts who advise the Food and Drug Administration—is not the last word. The FDA will consider the group's advice and make its own decision, probably within days. And the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is set to weigh in next week.

In a surprising turn, the advisory panel rejected, 16-2, boosters for almost everyone. Members cited a lack of safety data on extra doses and also raised doubts about the value of mass boosters, rather than ones targeted to specific groups.

Then, in an 18-0 vote, it endorsed extra shots for people 65 and older and those at risk of serious disease. Panel members also agreed that health workers and others who run a high risk of being exposed to the virus on the job should get boosters, too.

That would help salvage part of the White House's campaign but would still be a huge step back from the far-reaching proposal to offer third shots of both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines to Americans eight months after they get their second dose.

The White House sought to frame the action as progress.

"Today was an important step forward in providing better protection to Americans from COVID-19," said White House spokesman Kevin Munoz. "We stand ready to provide booster shots to eligible Americans once the process concludes at the end of next week."

The CDC has said it is considering boosters for older people, nursing home residents and front-line health care workers, rather than all adults.

The FDA and CDC will most likely decide at some later point whether people who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson shots should get boosters.

During several hours of vigorous debate Friday, members of the panel questioned the value of offering boosters to almost everybody 16 and over.

"I don't think a booster dose is going to significantly contribute to controlling the pandemic," said Dr. Cody Meissner of Tufts University. "And I think it's important that the main message we transmit is that we've got to get everyone two doses."

Dr. Amanda Cohn of the CDC said, "At this moment it is clear that the unvaccinated are driving transmission in the United States."

In a statement, Kathrin U. Jansen, Pfizer head of vaccine research and development, said the company continues to believe that boosters will be a "critical tool in the ongoing effort to control the spread of this virus."

Scientists inside and outside the government have been divided recently over the need for boosters and who should get them, and the World Health Organization has strongly objected to rich nations giving a third round of shots when poor countries don't have enough vaccine for their first.

Search for Petito boyfriend continues after body found

MOOSE, Wyo. (AP)—Authorities said a body discovered in northern Wyoming was believed to be that of a 22-year-old woman who disappeared while on a cross-country trek with a boyfriend now the subject of an intense search in a Florida nature preserve.

Petito

The FBI said the body of Gabrielle "Gabby" Petito was found Sunday by law enforcement agents who spent the weekend searching camp sites on the eastern border of Grand Teton National Park.

The cause of death not yet been determined, said FBI Supervisory Special Agent Charles Jones. Specifics on where and how the body was found were not disclosed.

"Full forensic identification has not been completed to confirm 100% that we found Gabby, but her family has been notified," Jones said. "This is an incredibly difficult time for (Petito's) family and friends."

Boyfiend Brian Laundrie, 23, has been identified as a person of interest in the case. He was last seen Tuesday by family members in Florida.

Jones and other law enforcement officials declined to take questions during a Sunday evening press conference in Grand Teton announcing the body's discovery.

Petito's father, Joseph, posted on social media an image of a broken heart above a picture of his daughter with a message that said, "she touched the world."

An attorney who has been acting as a spokesman for Petito's family asked in a statement that the family be given room to grieve.

Attorney Richard Benson Stafford indicated that the family would make a public statement at a later date, and he thanked officials with the FBI, Grand Teton Search and Rescue and other agencies that participated in the search for Petito.

"The family and I will be forever grateful," Stafford said in a statement.

An undeveloped camping area on the east side of Grand Teton bordering national forest land will remain closed until further notice while the investigation continues, Jones said.

Jones said investigators were still seeking information from anyone who may have seen Petito or Laundrie around camping sites in the area of Spread Creek, where law enforcement search efforts focused over the weekend.

The pair left in July on a cross-country trek in a converted van to visit national parks in the U.S. West. Laundrie was alone when he drove the van back to his parents' home in North Port, Florida, on Sept. 1, police said.

US launches mass expulsion of Haitian migrants from Texas

DEL RIO, Texas (AP)—The U.S. flew Haitians camped in a Texas border town back to their homeland Sunday and tried blocking others from crossing the border from Mexico in a massive show of force that signaled the beginning of what could be one of America's swiftest, large-scale expulsions of migrants or refugees in decades.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection mounted officers attempt to contain migrants as they cross the Rio Grande from Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, into Del Rio, Texas, Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021. AP

More than 320 migrants arrived in Port-au-Prince on three flights, and Haiti said six flights were expected Tuesday. In all, U.S. authorities moved to expel many of the more 12,000 migrants camped around a bridge in Del Rio, Texas, after crossing from Ciudad Acuña, Mexico.

The U.S. plans to begin seven expulsion flights daily on Wednesday, four to Port-au-Prince and three to Cap-Haitien, according to a U.S. official who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. Flights will continue to depart from San Antonio but authorities may add El Paso, the official said.

The only obvious parallel for such an expulsion without an opportunity to seek asylum was in 1992 when the Coast Guard intercepted Haitian refugees at sea, said Yael Schacher, senior U.S. advocate at Refugees International whose doctoral studies focused on the history of U.S. asylum law.

Similarly large numbers of Mexicans have been sent home during peak years of immigration but over land and not so suddenly.

Central Americans have also crossed the border in comparable numbers without being subject to mass expulsion, although Mexico has agreed to accept them from the U.S. under pandemic-related authority in effect since March 2020. Mexico does not accept expelled Haitians or people of other nationalities outside of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

When the border was closed Sunday, the migrants initially found other ways to cross nearby until they were confronted by federal and state law enforcement. An Associated Press reporter saw Haitian immigrants still crossing the river into the U.S. about 1.5 miles (2.4 kilometers) east of the previous spot, but they were eventually stopped by Border Patrol agents on horseback and Texas law enforcement officials.

ACROSS THE NATION

Biden faces limits of $1.9T COVID aid as some states resist

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden entered the White House promising to stop the twin health and economic crises caused by COVID-19, but $1.9 trillion and countless initiatives later he's confronting the limits of what Washington can achieve when some state and local governments are unwilling or unable to step up. Six months after Congress passed the massive rescue plan, administration records show that more than $550 billion has yet to be disbursed. The sum could help provide a key economic backstop as the coronavirus' delta variant continues to pose a threat. But in some cases, it's also led to frustration as aid for renters, testing and vaccines goes unused despite mass outreach campaigns. Republican critics say the unspent money shows that Biden's relief package was too big and inflationary; the administration says the unspent funds reflect the extent of planning in case the recovery from the pandemic hits more snags with virus mutations and unexpected economic disruptions. By law, about $105 billion of the state and local aid and more than half of the expanded child tax credits cannot be paid out yet.

Military training jet crashes in Texas, injuring both pilots

LAKE WORTH, Texas (AP)—A military training jet crashed Sunday in a neighborhood near Fort Worth, Texas, injuring the two pilots and damaging three homes but not seriously hurting anyone on the ground, authorities said. Both pilots managed to eject from the plane before it crashed in Lake Worth, which is just west of Fort Worth, authorities said at a news conference. "This incident could have been much worse knowing that this plane went down in a residential area," Lake Worth Fire Chief Ryan Arthur said of the crash, which was reported to authorities shortly before 11 a.m. One of the pilots was electrocuted after being caught in power lines, Lake Worth police said in a statement, adding that "although badly burnt, the pilot was conscious, alert and breathing." Police said the the second pilot was found in a wooded area a short distance away. Both were taken to area hospitals.

California firefighters scramble to protect sequoia groves

THREE RIVERS, Calif. (AP)—Flames on Sunday reached a grove of sequoia trees in California as firefighters battled to keep fire from driving further into another grove, where the base of the world's largest tree has been wrapped in protective foil. Fire officials warned that hot, dry weather and stronger winds were contributing to "critical fire conditions" in the area of the KNP Complex, two lightning-sparked blazes that merged on the western side of Sequoia National Park in the Sierra Nevada. The fire reached Long Meadow Grove, where the Trail of 100 Giant Sequoias is a national monument. Fire officials haven't yet been able to determine how much damage was done to the groves, which are in remote and hard-to-reach areas. However, an Associated Press photographer saw active flames burning up a trunk, with the forest floor ablaze below. The National Weather Service issued a red flag warning through Sunday, saying gusts and lower humidity could create conditions for rapid wildfire spread.

Asia

Manny Pacquiao to run for Philippine president

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine boxing icon and senator Manny Pacquiao says he will run for president in the 2022 elections.

Pacquiao accepted the nomination of his PDP-Laban party at its national convention on Sunday, saying that the Filipino people have been waiting for a change of government.

"I am a fighter, and I will always be a fighter inside and outside the ring," Pacquiao, 42, said in his speech.

"We need government to serve our people with integrity, compassion and transparency," he added.

Pacquiao is the president of the PDP-Laban faction led by him and Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III.

Another faction of the same party earlier this month nominated President Rodrigo Duterte to be its vice presidential candidate, and Duterte's former aide, Sen. Bong Go, as its presidential nominee.

Duterte, who is forbidden by the constitution from seeking a second six-year term, has accepted the nomination, but Go has declined to run for president.

AP

In this photo provided by the Manny Pacquiao MediaComms, Sen. Manny Pacquiao speaks during a national convention of his PDP-Laban party in Quezon city, Philippines on Sunday Sept. 19, 2021.

Duterte has led a brutal campaign against illegal drugs, and said last week he would rather "die first" before facing an international tribunal, the day after the International Criminal Court announced it would investigate allegations of crimes against humanity linked to the crackdown that has left thousands dead.

Pacquiao has accused the administration of Durterte, his former ally, of making corruption worse in the Philippines.

To critics who question his qualifications, the famous boxer has said his experience of personal hardships will better equip him to understand people's suffering—and fight poverty and corruption.

"In my whole life, I have not backed down on any fight," Pacquiao said.

He warned politicians whom he holds responsible for corruption "will soon end in jail together."

The rival party faction supporting Duterte earlier said it will petition the Commission on Elections to declare Pacquiao and his allies illegitimate officers of the ruling party.

Parents laud Chinese rules aimed at 'unhealthy' gaming among kids

By ZEN SOO
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

Li Zhanguo's two children, aged 8 and 4, don't have their own smartphones, but like millions of other Chinese children, they are no strangers to online gaming.

"If my children get their hands on our mobile phones or an iPad, and if we don't closely monitor their screen time, they can play online games for as long as three to four hours each time," he said.

Not anymore.

Like many other parents, Li is happy with new restrictions imposed on online game companies that took effect early this month. They limit children to just three hours weekly of online games time—an hour between 8pm and 9pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday most weeks.

The restrictions are a tightening of rules set in 2019 that banned children from gaming overnight and limited them to 90 minutes game time most weekdays.

The 90-minute restrictions, however, did not allay authorities' concerns over addiction to online gaming.

Experts say it's unclear if such policies can help prevent addiction to online games, since children might just get engrossed in social media. Ultimately, it's up to parents to nurture good habits and set screen time limits.

The new rules are part of a campaign to prevent kids from spending too much time on entertainment the communist authorities consider unhealthy. That also includes what officials call the "irrational fan culture" of worshipping celebrities.

The restrictions reflect growing concern over gaming addiction among children. One state media outlet has called online games "spiritual opium," in an allusion to past eras when addiction to the drug was widespread in China.

"Adolescents are the future of the motherland, and protecting the physical and mental health of minors is related to the vital interests of masses, and in cultivating newcomers in the era of national rejuvenation," the Press and Publications Administration said in a statement issued along with the new rules, alluding to a campaign by Chinese President Xi Jinping to cultivate a healthier society for a more powerful China.

Government reports estimated in 2018 that one in 10 Chinese minors were addicted to the internet. Centers have sprung up to diagnose and treat such problems among children.

The responsibility of ensuring that children play only three hours a day falls largely on Chinese gaming companies like NetEase and Tencent, whose wildly popular Honor of Kings mobile game is played by tens of millions across the country.

Companies like Tencent have set up real-name registration systems to prevent young users from exceeding their game time limits, and have incorporated facial recognition checks that require users to verify their identities.

The companies say they can limit access to users who are underage using the real-name registrations.

World

Volcano erupts on Atlantic island; lava wrecks homes

LOS LLANOS DE ARIDANE, Spain (AP)—A volcano on Spain's Atlantic Ocean island of La Palma erupted Sunday after a weeklong buildup of seismic activity, prompting authorities to evacuate thousands as lava flows destroyed isolated houses and threatened to reach the coast. New eruptions continued into the night.

The Canary Islands Volcanology Institute reported the initial eruption shortly after 3 p.m. near the southern end of the island, which saw its last eruption in 1971. Huge red plumes topped with black-and-white smoke shot out along the Cumbre Vieja volcanic ridge, which scientists had been closely watching following the accumulation of molten lava below the surface and days of small earthquakes.

Víctor Torres, president of the Canary Islands, said that by 11 p.m. some 5,000 people had been evacuated from their homes. Most, he said, had found family or friends to take them in. The rest were in shelters.

La Palma, with a population of 85,000, is one of eight volcanic islands in Spain's Canary Islands archipelago off Africa's western coast. At their nearest point, the islands are 100 kilometers (60 miles) from Morocco.

AP

Lava flows from an eruption of a volcano at the island of La Palma in the Canaries, Spain, Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021.

A 4.2-magnitude quake was recorded before the eruption, which took place in an area known as Cabeza de Vaca on the western slope as the ridge descends to the coast. As the eruptions continued, at least two open mouths belched bright red magma into the air that then flowed in tight streams down the mountain slope.

Shortly after the initial explosion rocked the area, one black lava flow with a burning tip immediately slid toward houses in the village of El Paso. Mayor Sergio Rodríguez said 300 people in immediate danger were evacuated, roads were closed and authorities urged the curious not to approach the area.

The lava eventually destroyed at least eight homes, according to local officials, causing at least one chalet with a tower to crumble. Authorities warned that the lava flows could also threaten the municipalities of El Paraíso, Alcalá and surrounding areas.

Carlota Martín was at an agricultural plot her family has in Todoque, just downhill from the eruption site, when she heard a huge explosion.

"When we saw the column of smoke, we thought it could not be real, but it kept growing and we knew we had to get out of there," she told The Associated Press. "You leave, but you are also looking back because you want to see what will happen.

WORLD BRIEFS

East Libya forces say 2 helicopters crashed, killing 2

CAIRO (AP) — Forces loyal to a powerful Libyan commander said two military planes crashed on Sunday in over a village in eastern Libya, killing at least two officers. The self-styled Libyan Arab Armed Forces, led by Gen. Khalifa Hifter, said the helicopters collided in the air over the village of Msus, 130 kilometers (about 81 miles) southeast of the city of Benghazi. A two-officer crew, including Brig. Gen. Bouzied al-Barrasi, was killed in the crash, while the second helicopter crew survived, the LAAF said in a brief statement. The statement did not give the cause of crash and said the helicopters were on a military mission. Mohammad Younes Menfi, head of Libya's Presidential Council, mourned the two officers.

3 migrants found dead in Poland, 9 others hospitalized

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — The bodies of three people who were trying to illegally cross into Poland from Belarus were found in the border region and another body of a woman was found on Belarus side, Poland's prime minister said Sunday. Premier Mateusz Morawiecki gave no other details but said on Facebook that he's in touch with the interior minister and head of the Border Guards and that any potential links between these "dramatic events and Belarusian provocations" on Poland's eastern border will be examined. European Union members Poland and Lithuania are facing increasing migrant pressures on their borders with Belarus, which are part of the bloc's eastern border. They say it's a "hybrid attack" by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's regime in Minsk that is aimed at destabilizing the 27-nation EU.

Fire breaks out at Greek migrant camp, forcing evacuation

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — A fire broke out late Sunday at a soon-to-be-closed migrant camp on the Greek island of Samos, forcing its evacuation. No injuries or major damage were reported. Authorities said the fire started in some abandoned buildings inside the camp and had been brought under control. The evacuation of the 550 migrants to an empty plot near the camp's entrance was underway. Ten unaccompanied minors were to be moved overnight to a new facility on the island. The transfer of all the migrants to the new €43 million ($50 million) facility had been scheduled to begin Monday and be completed by Wednesday. The existing camp once housed up to 7,500 migrants in squalid conditions, as Migration and Asylum Minister Notis Mitarakis admitted Saturday when he opened the new camp.

Overdrive

By BARRY SPYKER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

The 2021 Toyota Tacoma TRD Off Road 4x4. (TOYOTA/TNS)

These days Marcus uses his Toyota Tacoma pickup to haul kayaks along the Banana River in Central Florida. He's a tour guide in the beautiful Thousand Islands region, home to dolphin, manatee and pelicans.

But at one time his truck needs were more dire. "I had a seven-mile climb to my house from a river canyon when I lived in Mexico," he said. "My van wasn't getting it done, kept getting stuck and stranding me. That last mile was so rough you could barely walk it."

His TRD Off Road 4x4 did get it done. The beefy mid-size pickup, while lacking in general ride quality and interior refinement, excels when it comes to rough terrain. It's what draws folks to it. And, for 2021, it's more capable than ever.

It tackles the choppy ground with a 9.4-inch ground clearance and approach/departure angles of 32 degrees and 23 degrees -- a lift kit is available, too. It also has a locking rear differential, off-road-tuned suspension with Bilstein shocks, and hill descent control.

A terrain-select system controls the throttle and transmission to manage different surfaces, like mud, sand and loose rocks. Then there's Crawl mode, controlled by an overhead dial, which will take over acceleration and braking and can work itself out of sand or muck if it gets stuck.

As a preventive measure, Toyota offers a new Multi-Terrain View Monitor which provides an under-carriage view of what you're climbing over. That'll help spot a problem before scraping over the problem; A front skid plate protects against the ones you missed.

Four-wheel-drive Tacomas are tow rated for at least 6,400 pounds, more than ample for a couple of Jet Skis or dirt bikes, and have a maximum payload capacity of 1,685 pounds.

For avid off-roaders, Toyota for 2021 unveiled the Tacoma Trail Edition, though only 7,000 units were planned. It comes with its own badging, unique grille, wheels and all-terrain tires, 120-volt outlet in the cargo bed, and lockable storage compartments -- one of which can double as a cooler.

OK, so Tacoma can go anywhere, do anything on the trails. What about on the road, as a commuter, a daily truck for folks who just want to join the Tacoma cult? Well, here's the deal: It's plenty adequate but it could use more giddy-up, has a firmer ride and a sometimes finicky six-speed automatic transmission (a 6-speed manual is available on some trims). Oh, and expect fuel economy at a not-so-economical 20 mpg combined.

A 2.7-liter four-banger is standard but better to get the 3.5-liter V-6 engine, which delivers 278 horsepower and 265 pound-feet of torque. It takes nearly 8 seconds to reach 60 mph.That's not so bad but it feels strained climbing inclined on-ramps or in highway passing lanes.

The suspension, tuned for trails, softens bumps and dips well enough around town, too. It is well controlled on corners for a body-on-frame truck weighing around 4,500 pounds, but steering is dull and mushy; The truck tends to wander on the highway.

Tacoma's cabin has the same rugged attitude. It's ready for truck stuff, with lots of washable rubber and plastics, but don't look for anything special or lavish. Kudos to Toyota for finally adding a power-adjustable driver seat.

Leather-trimmed seats are comfortable, supportive and heated. But the cabin is as cramped as an airplane cockpit -- that includes the bigger double cab that seats five. Head room is minimal even up front, and both head and leg room are relatively tight in the rear.

Infotainment appears on an 8-inch touchscreen which is user-friendly and has short-cut controls on the center stack so the driver doesn't have to mess with digital icons while driving. New this year is compatibility with Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and Amazon Alexa, and it includes a JBL audio system with six speakers.

While it may be missing some high-tech elements inside, the Tacoma does come with a Toyota's Safety Sense package of features, including adaptive cruise control, forward collision warning with automatic braking, pedestrian detection, roll mitigation and lane-departure warning. It also has a post-collision SOS alert.

With it all, it's safe to say what draws many to the Tacoma -- the best-selling mid-size truck in the U.S. -- is it's beefy look and many variations. Its grille is bolder this year and flanked by blocky headlights and LED running lights. The TRD Pro gets a hood scoop, too.

Buyers can mix and match the cabs and cargo beds. The two-door Access cab or Double Cab each can accommodate five- or six-foot beds. Tacoma has eight trim levels and offers 10 exterior colors, from Voodoo Blue and Barcelona Red to five shades of gray.

Whatever the options, the Tacoma TRD Off Road is ready for the rugged. Even if you don't have river canyon hills to climb.

NUTS & BOLTS

2021 Toyota Tacoma TRD Off Road 4x4
With double cab, long bed

- **MSRP**: $37,890
- **As tested**: $44,550 (Includes TRD Off Road package, $3,815; Advanced Technology package w/multi-terrain monitor, $1,670)
- **What's all the excitement about?** Best-selling midsize truck in U.S. is beefier, ready for trails with new technology
- **Powertrain**: 3.5-liter V-6 engine makes 278 horsepower, 265 pound-feet of torque; mated to 6-speed automatic transmission
- **How's the performance?** Built for trails with 9.4-inch ground clearance, locking rear differential, hill descent and crawl modes; 0-60 mph in 7.8 seconds
- **Fuel economy:** 18 mpg city, 22 highway, for 20 combined

How often do I really need an oil change?

Q: I have 2001 Lexus RX300 with only 46,000 miles. I bought it new and have kept it in mint condition. In recent years, I have only put on 1,000 miles per year and have switched to a once-a-year oil change. I know the "law books" say you should change oil every six months, but I have also read a lot of commentary that you can go much longer than a year depending on how you use the car and mileage. In your opinion, is once a year OK?

A: Oil change intervals have changed from 3,000 miles/3 months, then to 7,500 miles/12 months, and now to whenever the warning appears on the instrument panel. But if your 1,000 annual miles are all due to short trips, I suggest you change the oil and filter at least once a year. Short hops do not allow the engine and oil to get hot enough to cook off any moisture that may have condensed in the crankcase.

Q: Can you recommend a good and reliable heavy-duty portable tire inflator? I need one that is strong and powerful enough to be able to add air to my Titan pickup tires. The one I have is OK for the smaller tires on my Kona and Soul and bicycle tires but it struggles with airing up the Titan tires.

A: I have not personally used a 12-volt compressor in the 100-psi range, but there are plenty out there. Many Titan pickups also have power inverters that provide 120 volts AC power, usually one in the cabin and another in the truck bed. More power to you.

Q: How does one know what grade of gas he's buying? I was buying gas at a top-tier gas station when a generic tanker truck pulled in and started filling up the storage tanks. Years ago, tanker trucks went to gas stations with the brand on the truck (Shell, Sunoco, BP, etc.); now all I see is generic. I asked the tanker driver about top-tier etc., and he said all gas at the tanker farms come out of the same storage tank, hence, it's all the same. Gas is gas. Who puts in the detergent additives in gas?

A: Gasoline is a commodity shipped from major refineries by pipeline or ship to tank farms. Before that gas is shipped to the retail stations, it is blended by the marketers. Some even have fancy names for the additive package. Top-tier fuel has a better detergent package than the EPA requires and is worth seeking. A few companies have their own dedicated fleets of tanker trucks while many contract with various carriers.

Q: Before a recent 600-mile trip, I checked my tire pressure and all four were at the recommended cold tire pressure of 35 psi. The dashboard monitors also indicated the same readings. About 1 1/2 hours into the trip (it was a hot day), the tire pressure light on the dashboard lit up. I checked the info center and saw that all four tire pressures were now at 37 psi. Is this something that I should be concerned with? They are original tires (only 39,000 miles on them).

A: Tires flex as you drive and flexing causes friction, and heat. The air pressure then goes up. We check our tires cold to provide the best baseline reading. Warm tire pressures vary. You may ignore common increases in pressure.

MOTORMOUTH

By BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.

Life & Style

Emmys: 'Crown,' 'Lasso,' 'Queen's Gambit,' streaming triumph

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Netflix's "The Crown" and "The Queen's Gambit" combined with Apple TV+'s "Ted Lasso" to win top series honors at the Sunday's Emmy Awards, a first for streaming services that cemented their rise to prominence in the television industry.

"I'm at a loss for words," said Peter Morgan, the creator and writer of the British royal saga "The Crown," which collected acting, writing and directing awards in addition to four acting honors.

His comment may also apply to the premium cable channels that once dominated the Emmy Awards and to the broadcast networks—including Sunday's ceremony host, CBS—that have long grown accustomed to being largely also-rans.

Kate Winslet, winner of the award for outstanding lead actress in a limited or anthology series or movie for "Mare of Easttown" poses at the 73rd Primetime Emmy Awards on Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021, at L.A. Live in Los Angeles. AP

Netflix won a leading total of 44 awards, equaling the broadcast network record set back in 1974, by CBS. The streaming service, which fielded the first drama series nominee, "House of Cards" in 2007, finally won the category.

Newcomer Apple TV+'s first top series came less than two years after it launched.

"The Crown" and "The Queen's Gambit" tied as leaders with 11 awards each, with "Ted Lasso" topping the comedy side with seven trophies.

There was a bright spot for HBO with its limited series "Mare of Easttown," the crime drama that earned four Emmys, including a lead acting award for star Kate Winslet. For broadcaster NBC, "Saturday Night Live" again came through with variety honors.

The ceremony proved disappointing as well to those scrutinizing diversity in Hollywood. The record number of nominees of color yielded only two Black winners, including RuPaul for "RuPaul's Drag Race" and star-creator Michaela Coel's writing award for "I May Destroy You."

Cedric the Entertainer proved a game host, moving from a hip-hop opening number to gags and sketches, but the relatively small crowd—a result of pandemic precautions—was fairly muted in their response to him and others' one-liners.

There was a feeling of personal sadness that pervaded the night, with a number of winners recounting the loss of loved ones.

"The Crown" stars Olivia Colman and Josh O'Connor won the top drama acting honors Sunday, with Jason Sudeikis, star of the warm-hearted "Ted Lasso," and Jean Smart of the generation-gap story "Hacks," winners on the comedy side.

Colman and O'Connor were a winning fictional mother-son duo: She plays Queen Elizabeth II, with O'Connor as Prince Charles in the British royal family saga that combines gravitas and soap opera.

"I'd have put money on that not happening," Colman said of the award, calling it "a lovely end to the most extraordinary journey" with the show's cast and creators. She cut her remarks short, explaining why she was growing tearful.

"I lost my daddy during COVID, and he would have loved all of this." she said.

O'Connor gave a shoutout to Emma Corwin, who played opposite him as Princess Diana and was also a nominee Sunday, as a "force of nature."

He also offered thanks to his grandparents, including his grandmother who died a few months ago, and his grandfather, Peter O'Connor, for the "greatest gifts" of kindness and loyalty.

Sudeikis, who co-created the series that many viewers found a balm for tough pandemic times, gave a speech that evoked the chipper, upbeat character he plays in the series about a U.K. soccer team and its unlikely American coach.

"This show's about families and mentors and teammates, and I wouldn't be here without those things in my life," said Sudeikis. He also thanked his fellow castmates, saying, "I'm only as good as you guys make me look."

Smart, who received a standing ovation, began her acceptance speech on a somber note: Her husband actor, Richard Gilliland, died six months ago.

"I would not be here without him" and his willingness to put her career first, said Smart. She also praised their two children as "courageous individuals in their own right."

Earlier in the evening, ebullient "Ted Lasso" castmate Hannah Waddingham, winner of the best supporting actress award for a comedy, said Sudeikis "changed my life with this, and more importantly my baby girl's."

Brett Goldstein, who won the counterpart award for supporting actor for playing a retired soccer star, said he had promised not to swear and either mimed or was muted for a few seconds, then called the show the "privilege and pleasure" of his life.

Gillian Anderson and Tobias Menzies were honored for their supporting performances on "The Crown."

WINNERS' LIST

List of main winners at the Emmy Awards:

- **Comedy Series**: "Ted Lasso."
- **Drama series**: "The Crown"
- **Limited Series**: "The Queen's Gambit"
- **Actress, Drama Series**: Olivia Colman, "The Crown"
- **Actor, Drama Series**: Josh O'Connor, "The Crown"
- **Actress, Comedy Series**: Jean Smart, "Hacks"
- **Actor, Comedy Series**: Jason Sudeikis, "Ted Lasso"
- **Actress, Limited Series or TV movie**: Kate Winslet, "Mare of Easttown."
- **Actor, Limited Series or TV movie**: Ewan McGregor, "Halston"
- **Reality-competition program**: "RuPaul's Drag Race"
- **Writing, Variety Series**: "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver"
- **Variety Talk Series**: "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver"
- **Variety Sketch Series**: "Saturday Night Live"
- **Writing, Comedy Series**: "Hacks"
- **Outstanding Variety Special (Pre-Recorded)**: "Hamilton"
- **Outstanding Variety Special (Live)**: "Stephen Colbert's Election Night 2020: Democracy's Last Stand Building Back America Great Again Better 2020"
- **Supporting Actress, Drama Series:** Gillian Anderson, "The Crown"
- **Supporting Actor, Drama Series**: Tobias Menzies, "The Crown"
- **Supporting Actress, Comedy Series:** Hannah Waddingham, "Ted Lasso"
- **Supporting Actor, Comedy Series**: Brett Goldstein, "Ted Lasso"
- **Supporting Actress, Limited Series or TV Movie**: Julianne Nicholson, "Mare of Easttown"
- **Supporting Actor, Limited Series or TV Movie**: Evan Peters, "Mare of Easttown"

Previously announced winners:

- **Guest Actor, Drama Series:** Courtney B. Vance, "Lovecraft County"
- **Guest Actress, Drama Series:** Claire Foy, "The Crown"
- **Television Movie:** "Dolly Parton's Christmas On the Square"
- **Guest Actor, Comedy Series:** Dave Chappelle, "Saturday Night Live"
- **Guest Actress, Comedy Series:** Maya Rudolph, "Saturday Night Live"
- **Structured Reality Program:** "Queer Eye"
- **Unstructured Reality Program:** "RuPaul's Drag Race: Untucked" ***(AP)***

Prison sentence complicates longtime friendship

DEAR ABBY: I have a former high school classmate who, over the years, I've gotten pretty close to. He has been there for me when I was at my lowest, and I have been there for him as well. He lives several hours away, but we talked almost daily in addition to being on social media.

A few months ago I stopped hearing from him, and his social media profile went dark. I had a bad feeling, so I Googled him and was shocked to see he had been arrested! While it wasn't a violent crime, it was horrible just the same. He has called me several times from prison, declaring his innocence—always requesting money. Abby, I live paycheck to paycheck. Even if I had extra money, I wouldn't feel comfortable giving it to him.

I feel hurt and used. Part of me says I need to end the friendship; the other part says he needs friends right now and it's not my place to judge him. I have refused to accept his last few calls because I really don't know what to do. Your thoughts are appreciated.

BLINDSIDED IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR BLINDSIDED: This person hasn't used you -- yet. The next time he reaches out, accept the call. When you do, make clear that you can offer moral support, but you cannot give him money because you live paycheck to paycheck. You may not hear from him after that. But if he continues to ask, take a giant step backward and recognize this friendship has run its course.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been together for three years. He recently went back to his home state 1,000 miles away for what I thought would be a two-day trip to grab some things from his late mother's estate. He has been unemployed for most of this past year due to the pandemic, so I'm somewhat conflicted about something he told me when I called to ask when he was coming home. He said he found a job and decided he wants to stay there and work for some months to save up enough money to pay off the bulk of our debt.

He did not consult me before making this decision. He told me he has worked out a COVID-safe housing arrangement with his sister and his aunt. The type of work he will be doing there is something he could do here, where our home is. I don't want to discourage him, but it baffles me that he would take a job 1,000 miles away. What if something were to happen to me or our animals? When I told him I didn't agree with his decision, he told me I should be happy he's no longer unemployed. How should I handle this?

FAR AWAY IN MISSOURI

DEAR FAR AWAY: Your husband shouldn't have taken a job 1,000 miles away without first talking with you. That said, what's done is done, and you need to let this play out. There's nothing to stop you from visiting. Fortunately, you and the animals are all doing well. If circumstances change, he can always quit the job and come back.

When the time comes, welcome your debt-free husband home. There will be plenty of time for the two of you to hash out IN PERSON what caused him to make such a disruptive decision if there were similar jobs available in your own community.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

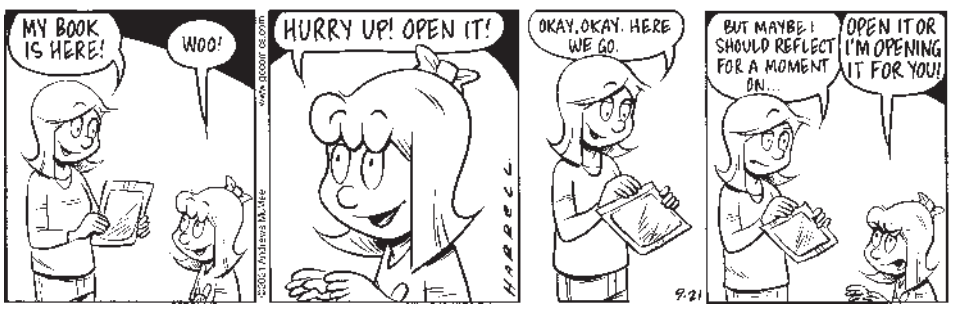
THAT STUPID CALVIN. HE'S SO MEAN.
ALL I TRY TO DO IS BE FRIENDS, AND HE TREATS ME LIKE I'M NOBODY.
WELL, WHO NEEDS JERKS LIKE HIM ANYWAY? I DON'T NEED HIM FOR A FRIEND. I CAN HAVE FUN BY MYSELF!
POOP.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


MY BOOK IS HERE!
WOO!
HURRY UP! OPEN IT!
OKAY, OKAY. HERE WE GO.
BUT MAYBE I SHOULD REFLECT FOR A MOMENT ON...
OPEN IT OR I'M OPENING IT FOR YOU!
9-21

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

BARK BARK BARK ARF ARF BARK ARF BARK ARF YAP YAP BARK YAP YAP
ARF ARF BARK ARF YAP BARK BARK
THAT SHOULD TEACH THAT OWL TO BE QUIET SO PEOPLE CAN SLEEP.

CROSSWORD

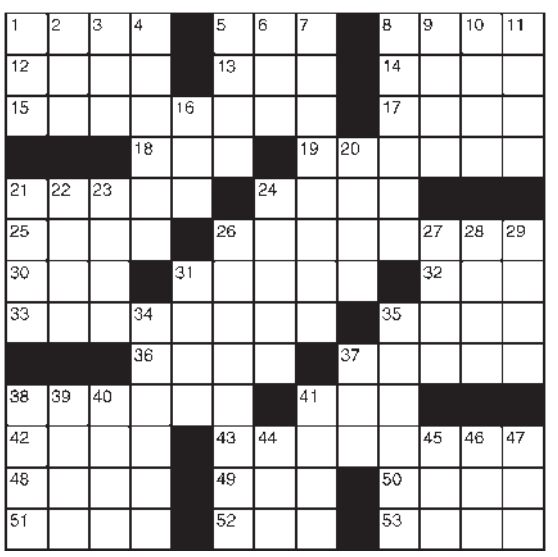
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Honey bunch?
5 Urban carrier
8 Carton sealer
12 Apple desktop
13 "Evita" role
14 On the briny
15 Learning aid
17 Numbered rds.
18 Actor Harrison
19 Snicket of kid-lit
21 Harry Potter's rival
24 Jean Auel heroine
25 IRA type
26 Authorized
30 Numerical prefix
31 Once in — moon
32 Hitter's stat
33 Fabric
35 Brazen
36 Campus mil. group
37 Walking sticks
38 Floor duster
41 California's Big —
42 Antioxidant berry
43 Main Street, for one
48 Grassy area
49 Chap
50 Heart charts
51 Capri, e.g.
52 Away from WSW
53 Monopoly card

DOWN
1 Iota
2 Outback bird
3 Consume
4 Burn
5 Roman 209
6 "Caught ya!"
7 Excessive amount, as food
8 Airport area
9 Regarding
10 Hammer part
11 Relaxed
16 Old Oldsmobile
20 Writer Wiesel
21 Bongo, for one
22 Novelist Jaffe
23 Bickering
24 Insurance giant
26 Newspaper section
27 Golf bag item
28 Competent
29 Pot covers
31 Ending for buck
34 Winter weasel
35 Forbidden
37 Prompt
38 Painter Salvador
39 Some HDTVs
40 Two-masted boat
41 Eyelid woe
44 Scamper
45 '50s president
46 Census stat
47 Leary's drug

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 9-21



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alfonso Ribeiro, 50; Nancy Travis, 60; Bill Murray, 71; Stephen King, 74.

Happy Birthday: Put your energy where it counts. Stay focused on what's important to you. Make adjustments that favor good health and better relationships. Find ways to ease stress and spend more time doing good things for you and those you love. Don't let the tension build when a couple of adjustments are all you need to make your life better. Your numbers are 4, 12, 23, 28, 31, 39, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Emotions will be difficult to control. A positive attitude will make a difference in the outcome of a personal situation. Be mindful of others before you share your thoughts. Getting along will be necessary if you want to get things done. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You'll have a change of heart. Look at what you are up against, and weigh the pros and cons before agreeing to something questionable. Leave nothing unfinished that might put your position, status or reputation in jeopardy. Use your energy strategically. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Prepare to question everything and everyone before you agree to something that will disrupt your life. Put your energy into fact-finding, organizing and expanding your chances to advance. Don't limit yourself; be fearless. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Mood swings will slow down productivity and cause problems at home and work. Getting along will be half the battle if you plan to get things done on time. Alone time will give you a chance to work through sensitive issues. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Stay in touch with people who challenge and motivate you. Getting together with an old friend or relative will spark your imagination and help you confirm what you can do to make your life better. Don't let anyone hold you back. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Put more thought into what you want to accomplish, and press forward without giving in to interruptions. A unique approach to handling meaningful relationships will give you the edge you need to get your way. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Pour your energy into things that make you happy. Expand your interests, and you'll meet people who stimulate your mind and push you to be your best. Share your feelings and thoughts, and you'll improve your relationships with others. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Dig in, and don't stop until you are satisfied with what you accomplish. Give whatever you do your special touch, and you'll gain recognition. An enthusiastic attitude will lead to a lifestyle change that promotes better health. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Focus on home, family and finishing what you start. A change of pace will spark your imagination and encourage you to consider a new and exciting way to use your skills and experience. Find an affordable pick-me-up, and enjoy the moment. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Avoid getting in the middle of someone's dilemma. Distance yourself from family feuds and taking sides. Make personal changes that will encourage fitness, health and appealing to someone you love. Don't restrict your plans to please someone who is being unreasonable. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* A chance to partner with someone will grab your interest and motivate you to act. Crunch the numbers to figure out the best way to utilize your cash and come out ahead. Don't take a risk with your health or physical well-being. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Listen to what others have to say before you make a decision that will alter your financial situation. Pay more attention to the consequences you'll face if you make a move that others do not favor. Do sufficient research before you proceed. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are vibrant, open-minded and responsive. You are chic and amicable.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

7	3			6		8	5
		9	1				7
4						2	
			2		1	4	
8				9			1
	4		7		3		
	9						6
3					6	7	
2		5		3			8	4

Difficulty Level ★★ 9/21

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	3	1	4	6	7	2	8	9
2	7	4	1	9	8	6	5	3
6	8	9	2	3	5	7	4	1
4	9	2	5	7	6	3	1	8
7	6	5	3	8	1	9	2	4
3	1	8	9	4	2	5	6	7
8	4	6	7	2	3	1	9	5
9	5	3	6	1	4	8	7	2
1	2	7	8	5	9	4	3	6

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

NORTHERN BOTTLENOSE WHALE — Solution: 7 letters

G	R	O	U	P	S	B	M	E	D	I	V	I	N	G
B	R	I	T	A	I	N	A	I	D	N	U	O	R	U
A	E	E	R	U	P	T	M	S	L	A	V	A	N	L
R	D	D	E	E	P	O	M	U	V	B	Y	T	W	D
E	F	A	M	N	R	M	A	O	R	E	R	R	H	O
N	I	A	V	P	L	F	L	H	V	O	S	I	I	R
T	S	H	H	I	O	A	L	L	D	E	D	S	T	S
S	H	I	C	S	S	A	N	A	E	E	D	K	E	A
Q	C	U	O	A	R	S	R	D	T	S	G	N	U	L
U	S	N	N	G	O	B	T	A	T	T	O	O	T	H
A	A	L	E	T	A	R	U	R	E	E	E	N	F	E
R	U	R	L	L	E	M	P	F	A	P	E	N	L	A
E	U	S	Q	U	I	D	E	P	F	I	P	T	E	D
L	R	O	L	O	C	I	T	N	A	L	T	A	H	D
N	O	Y	N	A	C	I	T	C	R	A	B	U	S	S

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Appear, Approach, Atlantic, At Risk, Barents, Britain, Buff, Canyon, Color, Culls, Dalhousie, Davis Strait, Deep, Dimorphic, Diving, Dorsal, Erupt, Flattened, Game, Gray, Greenland, Groups, Head, Hide, Hunted, Labrador, Larger, Lungs, Lure, Mammal, Mass, Moved, Naval, Nose, Redfish, Roam, Round, Shelf, Sonar, Square, Squid, Subarctic, Teeth, Tooth, Vessel, White

Yesterday's Answer: Value

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 47 through 62 order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Lamar Jackson carries Baltimore past Kansas City, 36-35

BALTIMORE (AP)—Lamar Jackson finally beat Patrick Mahomes, using his legs to rush for 107 yards and scoring twice, including flipping into the end zone for the winning score as Baltimore defeated Kansas City 36-35 Sunday night.

Jackson was 0-3 against the Chiefs, and he needed all of his multiple skills to break through to hand Mahomes his first loss in September after 11 victories. The matchup of NFL MVPs — Mahomes in 2018, Jackson the next year — was a wild affair from the start.

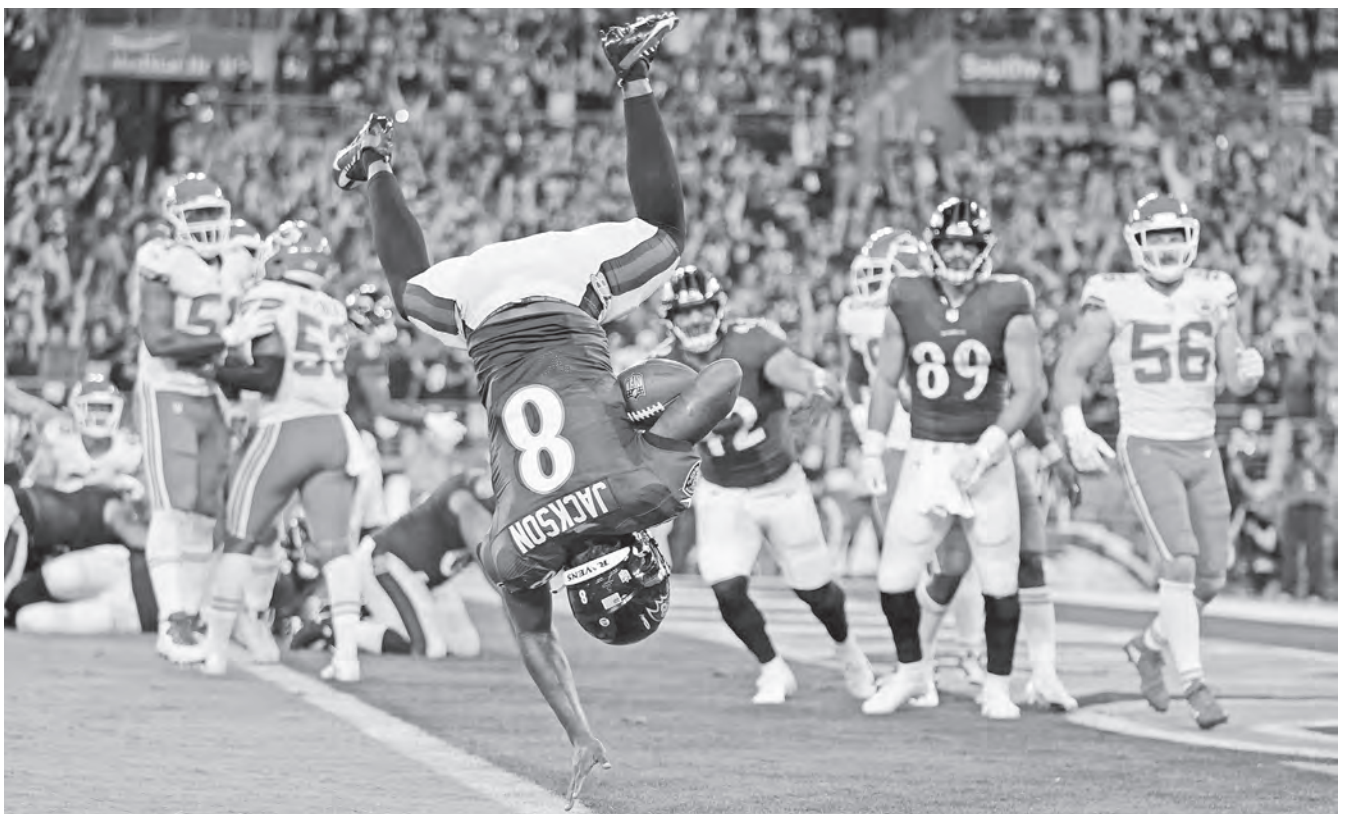
And the Ravens needed a fumble by Clyde Edwards-Helaire as Kansas City was marching into field goal range to clinch it.

With Jackson leading the Ravens' 251 yards rushing and throwing for 239 and a score, Baltimore ensured that all four AFC North teams would have 1-1 records. Kansas City, which allowed 481 yards and gained 405, also is 1-1 in the rugged AFC West.

The dynamic Jackson twice got into the end zone to his right with dives—well, the last TD was more of a vault. Twice the Ravens misfired on 2-point conversions, but Jackson's 2-yard run on fourth down after Edwards-Helaire fumbled secured the victory.

Jackson finished 18 for 26 with two interceptions. Mahomes was 24 for 31 for 343 yards and three TDs, with an interception.

Marquise Brown had six receptions for 113 yards for Baltimore. Travis Kelce had seven catches for 109 yards and a dynamic 46-yard slalom in which he broke three tackles before falling into the end zone, exhausted.



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson scores a touchdown in the second half of an NFL football game against the Kansas City Chiefs, Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021, in Baltimore. AP

Buccaneers 48, Falcons 25

In Tampa, Fla., Tom Brady threw for 276 yards and five touchdowns, and Tampa Bay beat Atlanta, extending its win streak to a franchise-record 10 consecutive games.

Brady improved to 9-0 lifetime against the Falcons (0-2), who have dropped seven in a row going back to last season, with three of those losses coming against the Bucs (2-0). Rob Gronkowski caught a pair of TD passes for the third straight game, including the Super Bowl.

Mike Evans also scored on receptions of 3 and 1 yards, the latter set up by Shaquil Barrett's third-quarter interception of Matt Ryan, who fell to 0-6 against teams led by Brady.

Ryan tossed TD passes to Calvin Ridley and Cordarrelle Patterson before running for a 2-point conversion to trim an 18-point deficit to 28-25 late in the third. But he also threw a pair of interceptions that Mike Edwards returned for fourth-quarter TDs that broke the game open.

Titans 33, Seahawks 30, OT

In Seattle, Derrick Henry ran for 182 yards and two fourth-quarter touchdowns for Tennessee, and Randy Bullock hit a 36-yard field goal midway through overtime.

Down 30-16 early in the fourth quarter, the Titans leaned on their All-Pro running back, who carried them to a road win on the day Seattle welcomed fans back for a regular-season game for the first time since the end of the 2019 season.

They left in silence, thanks to Henry, a terrific fourth-quarter drive from Ryan Tannehill and Seattle's own missed opportunities.

Henry also had a career-high six receptions for 55 yards. Tannehill was 27 for 40 for 347 yards for Tennessee (1-1), and Julio Jones had six receptions for 128 yards.

Seattle's Russell Wilson was 22 of 31 for 343 yards and two touchdowns. The Seahawks (1-1) led 24-9 at halftime.

Cardinals 34, Vikings 33

In Glendale, Ariz., Kyler Murray threw for 400 yards and three touchdowns, and Arizona topped Minnesota when Greg Joseph missed a 37-yard field goal wide right in the final seconds.

It was a fitting ending to a seesaw game that saw the lead change hands eight times.

Murray also ran for a touchdown and threw two costly interceptions, including one that was returned for a touchdown.

Cowboys 20, Chargers 17

In Inglewood, Calif., Greg Zuerlein connected on a 56-yard field goal as time expired to give the Cowboys the win.

After Tristan Vizcaino tied the game with a 29-yarder with 3:58 remaining, Dallas went 49 yards in 11 plays to get into Zuerlein's range.

Troy Pollard ran for 109 yards on 13 carries for the third 100-yard game of his career. Dak Prescott completed 23 of 27 passes for 237 yards as the Cowboys evened their record at 1-1 despite being without five players who started the opener.

Justin Herbert had his 10th 300-yard game—completing 31 of 41 passes for 338 yards—tying him for the most by a quarterback in his first two seasons. He had one touchdown pass but threw two interceptions.

Raiders 26, Steelers 17

In Pittsburgh, Derek Carr threw for 382 yards and two touchdowns for Las Vegas, including a 61-yard strike to Henry Ruggs midway through the fourth quarter.

Carr completed 28 of 37 passes against a Pittsburgh defense that finished the game without a handful of starters, including All-Pro outside linebacker T.J. Watt, who exited in the second quarter with a groin injury.

Ben Roethlisberger passed for 295 yards for Pittsburgh (1-1), including a 25-yard catch-and-run early in the fourth quarter that rookie running back Najee Harris turned into the first touchdown of his career.

Rams 27, Colts 24

In Indianapolis, Matthew Stafford led Los Angeles on two late scoring drives and Matt Gay made a tiebreaking 38-yard field goal with 2:23 to play.

The Rams have won three straight in this series and have taken all five road openers under coach Sean McVay.

Stafford wasn't as proficient as he was in the season-opening victory over Chicago but he did play well — even after appearing to hit his right thumb on the helmet of Colts defensive tackle DeForest Buckner in the first half. He finished 19 of 30 for 278 yards, two TD passes and one interception.

Cooper Kupp caught nine passes for 163 yards and two scores for the Rams (2-0).

The Colts are 0-2 for the first time in coach Frank Reich's four-year tenure.

Bills 35, Dolphins 0

In Miami Gardens, Fla., Josh Allen threw two touchdown passes, Zach Moss ran for two scores and the Bills knocked out Miami quarterback Tua Tagovailoa early with a rib injury.

Devin Singletary rushed for 82 yards and another touchdown for the Bills (1-1), who have won six consecutive games in the series.

It was the second-worst shutout loss by the Dolphins (1-1) at home, topped only by a 43-0 defeat to New England in 2019.

Tagovailoa lasted only two series, knocked out of the game on a failed fourth-down play near midfield where Buffalo's A.J. Epenesa blew past Dolphins right tackle Jesse Davis and was at full speed when he launched into Miami's quarterback. Tagovailoa needed a couple tries just to get to the sideline and was carted to the locker room not long afterward.

Browns 31, Texans 21

In Cleveland, Baker Mayfield came back after hurting his left shoulder to throw a touchdown pass and run for a TD, leading Cleveland to the victory.

Nick Chubb had a 26-yard touchdown run for the Browns (1-1), who bounced back from a Week 1 loss at Kansas City to thrill their first capacity home crowd since 2019.

Mayfield went 10 for 10 after a first-half interception—and injuring his non-throwing shoulder while making the tackle on the play—and finished 19 of 21 for 213 yards. Chubb had 95 yards on 11 carries.

Broncos 23, Jaguars 13

In Jacksonville, Fla., Courtland Sutton had nine catches for 159 yards, and the Broncos handed the Jaguars their 17th consecutive loss.

In Denver's first game without Jerry Jeudy (ankle), Sutton showed he can be Teddy Bridgewater's go-to guy. Sutton's big day included a shoestring grab in the third quarter that surely rates among his best plays in four seasons.

Sutton had nearly half of Bridgewater's 328 yards passing. Bridgewater completed 26 of 34 passes, with TD tosses to Tim Patrick and Noah Fant.

The Broncos are 2-0 for the seventh time in the last nine years and the first since 2019.

Patriots 25, Jets 6

In East Rutherford, N.J., Mac Jones was smart and efficient, Damien Harris and James White had touchdown runs, and the Patriots took advantage of a nightmarish outing by Zach Wilson.

With the spotlight on the Mac vs. Zach matchup of rookie first-round quarterbacks, it was Jones who shined as Wilson was intercepted four times—twice by J.C. Jackson.

Jones, the No. 15 overall pick in the draft, went 22 of 30 for 186 yards for the Patriots (1-1) a week after going 29 for 39 for 281 yards and a touchdown in a loss to Miami. Sunday's numbers were more than good enough for New England to beat New York for the 11th straight game.

49ers 17, Eagles 11

In Philadelphia, Jimmy Garoppolo threw one touchdown pass and ran in for a score, leading San Francisco to the road win.

Nick Bosa had two sacks and San Francisco's stingy defense shut down Jalen Hurts a week after Philadelphia dominated Atlanta in a 32-6 win.

Hurts completed just 12 of 23 passes for 190 yards. He ran for 82 yards, including a 1-yard TD in the fourth quarter.

The 49ers (2-0) return home after practicing all week at The Greenbrier resort in West Virginia with a pair of road wins on the East Coast to open the season.

Panthers 26, Saints 7

In Charlotte, N.C., Sam Darnold threw for 305 yards and two touchdowns, and Carolina's defense turned in another strong performance.

Darnold improved to 2-0 as Panthers starter, connecting on TDs to Brandon Zylstra and D.J. Moore as Carolina jumped to a 17-0 lead by outgaining the Saints 274-65 in the first half.

Christian McCaffrey added 137 yards from scrimmage and scored his first touchdown of the season as the Panthers (1-1) defeated the Saints (1-1) for only the second time in the last 10 tries.

Jameis Winston, who threw five TD passes in a 38-3 win over Green Bay in the season opener, was held to 111 yards passing, intercepted twice and sacked four times. Alvin Kamara was limited to 5 yards on eight carries as the Saints struggled with five of the team's offensive coaches out due to COVID-19 protocols. In all, the Saints were missing eight assistant coaches cue to COVID-19.

Bears 20, Bengals 17

In Chicago, Justin Fields played the second half after Andy Dalton exited with a knee injury against his former team, and the rookie quarterback used Chicago's stellar defensive performance to direct the Bears to their first win of the season.

Roquan Smith returned an interception 53 yards for his first career touchdown, one of three straight picks thrown by Joe Burrow.

The Bears were up 20-3 before Burrow threw a 42-yard touchdown pass to Ja'Marr Chase. Fields then got intercepted at the Chicago 25 by Logan Wilson, who returned it to the 7. Burrow hit Tee Higgins with a TD on the next play, cutting it to 20-17 with 3:39 remaining. But the Bears (1-1) hung on for their third straight win over Cincinnati (1-1).

Cole stumbles against Indians as Yanks drop 1 1/2 games out

NEW YORK (AP)—Gerrit Cole stumbled when the New York Yankees needed an ace-like outing, allowing seven runs over 5 2/3 innings in a costly 11-1 defeat to the Cleveland Indians on Sunday.

After losing consecutive games by eight or more runs for the first time since May 2008, New York dropped 1 1/2 games behind Toronto for the second AL wild card and 2 1/2 games back of wild card leader Boston with 12 games left.

"Just couldn't get that out, couldn't get that third out and couldn't get the ball off the bat, I guess," Cole said. "It wasn't falling our way but at the same time it's September. It's a crucial game and that was too many runs to come back from."

Harold Ramírez hit a pair of two-run singles and drove in a career-high four runs before leaving as a precaution with a right shoulder injury. Ramírez banged into the right-field wall in the third inning on a drive Gio Urshela that hit the top of the fence and bounced over for a home run.

José Ramírez hit his 35th homer, had four hits and reached five times for Cleveland, which scored double-digit runs for the third time in four games.

"He's such a good hitter," Cleveland manager DeMarlo Hale said, "There's a consistency to him. He will have ups and downs but he's a big threat in the middle of the lineup."

The Yankees were outscored 22-4 in the final two games of a series against a team with a losing record,. New Yorl is 7-15 since a 13-game winning streak, tied with 102-loss Baltimore for the worst record in the AL over that span.

It was the third time since 2016 New York allowed double-digit runs in consecutive games.

"We got to do better than this," manager Aaron Boone said. "That's an awful couple of days out there,m and we got to get past it in a hurry and we got to play well. We got to go and play a complete game like we did Friday night, but we can't do that every two, every three games. We got to play really good baseball if we're even going to think about being where we want to be."

Cole (15-8) matched his 2021 high for earned runs and gave up 10 hits for the first time since June 30, 2017, with Pittsburgh. Cleveland went 5 for 11 against his four-seam fastball, his ERA rose to 3.03 and the Yankees dropped to 15-13 in his starts this year.

New York Yankees starting pitcher Gerrit Cole, center, is relieved in the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Cleveland Indians, Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021, in New York. AP

Cardinals 8, Padres 7

In St. Louis, San Diego center fielder Fernando Tatis Jr. dropped Nolan Arenado's bases-loaded popup and heaved the ball home, leading to a five-run first inning as St. Louis completed a three-game sweep and extended its winning streak to eight.

Tatis' brutal error and mental mistake—he chose not to make an easy throw to second or third for a forceout—came one day after his dugout dustup with teammate Manny Machado.

Jake Arrieta (5-14) left after six batters and 20 pitches because of a right adductor groin strain. He allowed five runs—four earned—three hits and a walk while getting one out.

Alex Reyes (9-8) allowed one run over two innings, and Giovanny Gallegos struck out two in a perfect ninth for his 10th save.

Blue Jays 5, Twins 3

In Toronto, José Berríos (12-9) allowed three runs and four hits in 6 2/3 innings to beat the team that traded him to Toronto on July 30.

Bo Bichette homered in a five-run first inning. Vladimir Guerrero Jr. had three hits and an RBI as the Blue Jays improved to 15-3 in September and at 84-65 moved a season-best 19 games above .500.

Jordan Romano got three outs for his 19th save.

Luke Farrell (1-1), a son of former Blue Jays manager John Farrell, was pulled after allowing seven hits in one inning. Minnesota lost for the sixth time in eight games.

Red Sox 8, Orioles 6

In Boston, Kiké Hernández's game-tying RBI single caromed off the second-base bag and into shallow center field, sparking a three-run, seventh-inning rally that carried Boston to a three-game sweep and five-game winning streak.

J.D. Martinez had a solo homer and Kevin Plawecki added a two-run single for the Red Sox.

Trey Mancini had a three-run double for the Orioles, who lost 12 of the final 13 meetings against the Red Sox after sweeping a season-opening three-game series.

After Hirokazu Sawamura (5-1) gave up a two-run lead in the top of the seventh, Boston rallied against Conner Greene (1-1). Garrett Richards got three outs for his third save.

Baltimore has a big league-worst 102 losses.

Tigers 2, Rays 0

In St. Petersburg, Fla., Wily Peralta (4-3) gave up three hits in seven innings, Eric Haase homered off Shane McClanahan (9-6) and Dustin Garneau went deep against Nick Anderson.

Kyle Funkhouser pitched the ninth for his first save since college.

Tampa Bay leads the AL East by 6 1/2 games and is headed to its second straight division title.

Athletics 3, Angels 2

In Anaheim, Calif., Shohei Ohtani struck out 10 but went winless in consecutive starts on the mound for the first time since June.

Yan Gomes' second-inning home run and Matt Chapman's drive in the fourth built a 2-0 lead against Ohtani, who is is 9-2 with a 3.28 ERA along with a .257 average at the plate, 44 homers and 94 RBIs.

Jed Lowie hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the 10th off Raisel Iglesias (7-5), and Oakland won its fifth straight to remain within two games of Toronto for the second AL wild card. The A's will finish with a winning record in four straight years for the first time since 1999-2006.

Jose Rojas tied the score in the ninth with an RBI single off Sergio Romo that sent a second run home when right fielder Seth Brown bobbled the ball and then threw the ball to the backstop for an error. Lou Trivino (6-7) got five outs for the win.

Mariners 7, Royals 1

In Kansas City, Mo., rookie Jarred Kelenic homered, doubled twice and went 5 for 9 with three home runs, two doubles, three walks and seven RBIs in the three-game series.

Seattle remained four games behind Toronto for the second AL wild-card spot.

Kansas City was ensured its fifth straight losing season. The Royals won the 2015 World Series, went 81-81 the next year and haven't finished above .500 since.

Logan Gilbert (6-5) cruised through seven innings, allowing one run on three hits.

Jackson Kowar (0-4) gave up five runs and seven hits in four innings.

White Sox 7, Rangers 2

In Arlington, Texas, José Abreu capped a five-run fourth inning with a two-run single that tied him with Kansas City's Salvador Perez for the major league RBIs lead at 113.

Yasmani Grandal homered for the second game in a row and Chicago closed on making the playoffs in consecutive seasons for the first time. The White Sox lead the AL Central by 11 games over second-place Cleveland.

Cesar Herrnandez also had a two-run single in that outburst off Jordan Lyles (9-12) for a 5-0 lead.

Lucas Giolito (9-10) struck out four while allowing one run over 5 1/3 innings.

Dodgers 8, Reds 5

In Cincinnati, Clayton Kershaw (10-7) allowed one run and three hits over five sharp innings for his first win since June 27.

Gavin Lux and Corey Seager hit two-run homers and Will Smith went deep as the Dodgers won for the eighth time in nine games. They began the afternoon two games behind San Francisco in the NL West.

Cincinnati lost its eighth straight series and dropped three games back of St. Louis for the second NL wild-card spot. Wade Miley (12-7) allowedg six runs and nine hits in a season-low three innings.

Marlins 6, Pirates 5

In Miami, Lewin Díaz led off the bottom of the 10th with a two-run homer off Chad Kuhl (5-7), denying the Pirates what would have been their first series sweep this season.

Ben Gamel's sacrifice fly off Steven Okert (2-1) gave the Pirates a 5-4 lead in the 10th after automatic runner Ke'Bryan Hayes advanced on a wild pitch.

Cubs 6, Brewers 4

In Milwaukee, Patrick Wisdom set a Cubs rookie record with his 27th homer, hitting a three-run drive that capped a five-run comeback in the eighth.

Pinch-hitter Willson Contreras started the rally with a 14-pitch plate appearance against Brad Boxberger (5-4). Adam Morgan (1-0) pitched one inning of shutout relief, and Michael Rucker retired Jace Peterson on a flyout for his first big league save.

Milwaukee's magic number for wrapping up its first NL Central title since 2018 remained at three.

Astros 7, Diamondbacks 6

In Houston, Jose Siri and Chas McCormick hit back-to-back home runs in the eighth off Brandyn Sittinger (0-1).

AL West-leading Houston won for the fourth time in five games and cut Tampa Bay's lead for the best record in the AL to 3 ½ games.

Peter Solomon (1-0) allowed one run in four innings of relief for his first big league win. Ryan Pressly pitched the ninth for his 25th save.

Nationals 3, Rockies 0

In Washington, Juan Soto homered to back Paolo Espino (5-5), who allowed three hits in 5 2/3 innings and helped end the Rockies' rare five-game road winning streak.

Soto hit a 454-foot drive in the third inning off Jon Gray (8-11) for his 26th home run this season. Soto is hitting .362 with a 1.178 OPS since the All-Star break.

Colorado went 7-2 on its first winning trip this year and is 25-52 on the road and 45-27 at Coors Field.

Kyle Finnegan got three outs to complete a five-hitter and earned his 10th save.

Braves 3, Giants 0

In San Francisco, Eddie Rosario, acquired from Cleveland on July 30, became the second Atlanta player in a month to hit for the cycle. Adam Duvall also homered, his 36th.

Max Fried (12-7) allowed three hits in seven innings for the Braves, who moved two games ahead of Philadelphia in the NL East after the Phillies lost to the Mets. Will Smith got his 33rd save.

San Francisco's NL West lead was cut to one game over the Dodgers. Anthony DeSclafani (12-7) gave up two runs and six hits in six innings.

Mets 3, Phillies 2

In New York, Jeff McNeil hit a tiebreaking homer leading off the seventh inning, and New York beat Philadelphia, snapping a five-game skid and damaging the Phillies playoff hopes.

The Phillies blew a two-run lead Sunday night and fell two games behind the Atlanta Braves in the NL East and 3 1/2 games behind the St. Louis Cardinals in the race for the second NL wild card.

McNeil's homer off Phillies starter Kyle Gibson was his first since Aug. 1. and gave the Mets their first lead since squandering a 3-2 advantage in the eighth inning of Tuesday's 7-6, 11-inning loss to the Cardinals.

Aaron Loup (6-0), the fifth of six Mets pitchers, escaped a bases-loaded jam in the sixth and tossed 1 1/3 hitless innings. Edwin Diaz earned his 30th save.

Gibson (10-8) allowed three runs on seven hits and one walk with nine strikeouts in 6 2/3 innings. The Phillies stranded 10 runners.

Ko'Bees wins thriller over RNV in Tinian hoops

By MARK RABAGO
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Ko'Bees defeated RNV Construction by the skin of their teeth, 50-48, in the 2021 Island-wide Men's BudLight Basketball League Friday night at the Tinian Multi-Purpose Gymnasium.

RNV Construction had a chance to force overtime when one of their shooters was fouled attempting a 3-pointer with a second to go in the game clock and with the team trailing 47-50.

However, the RNV player could only make 1 out of 3 free throws allowing Ko'Bees to escape with the 2-point victory.

It was tight from the get-go with Ko'Bees taking a candle stick lead after the first canto, 11-10. Sean Jay gave Ko'Bees some wiggle room in the second when he unloaded 8 points to give his team a 24-16 spread at the break.

John Hardpol took off where Jay left off in the third, firing from everywhere en route to scoring 15 points in the quarter as Ko'Bees appeared on its way to an easy win leading by 9 points, 40-31, with 10 minutes left in the contest.

But Jello Bungabong ignited his RNV teammates to rally in the fourth and final quarter only to come short when they misfired from the 15-foot line.

Hardpol paced Ko'Bees with 27 points—all in the second half. Jay also chipped in 13 in the win, Ko'Bees' second in eight games. The 1-7 RNV team was paced by the 18 markers of Rod Borca, while Bunganong wound up with 11.

Ko'Bees and RNV Construction players in action in their 2021 Island-wide Men's BudLight Basketball League matchup Friday night at the Tinian Multi-Purpose Gymnasium. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In the second game, Dennis and Anthony Borja combined for 41 points in Team CNMI's 78-57 dismantling of SMA Flyers. The win improved CNMI's win-loss record to 4-3, while SMA Flyers dropped to 2-5.

Dennis led CNMI with 21 points, but Anthony was not far behind with 19 points of his own. Rico Canlas fired 16 markers in the loss, while Tanley Villagracia added 13 points.

First Game

Ko'Bees 50 – Hardpol 27, Jay 13, Stanley 6, Miller 5, Slim 3.
RNV 48 – Borca 18, Bungabong 11, Uda Undo 5, Bucayag 4, Tortor 4, Albano 4, Lauyon 2, Rizardo 2.
Scoring by quarters: 11-10, 24-16, 40-31, 50-48.

Second Game

CNMI 78 – D. Borja 22, A. Borja 19, Lizama 9, Mabansag 9, Maligson 8, Rutor 5, Monkeya 4, K. Borja 2.
SMA Flyers 57 – Canlas 16, Villagracia 13, Doria 8, Gammad 7, A. Lagunay 6, R. Lagunay 5, Bautista 2.
Scoring by quarters: 21-8, 43-25, 65-40, 78-57.

PACIFIC

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Cup this year with high expectations of moving up to Group II. So even after barely losing to Vietnam, we were still confident going into the final playoffs that we could win. We got drawn Syria in the finals over Hong Kong, and we felt Syria was the stronger team. So the Pacific Oceania boys did brilliantly to pull through and we couldn't be happier. It was an epic finish to a hard week," said Baudinet.

Jeff Race, former Pacific Oceania captain and Sinclair's coach in the CNMI National Tennis team, congratulated Sinclair, his former player Baudinet, and the rest of the Pacific Oceania team for the promotion to Group II.

"Group II is very tough. Most of the Top 6 teams from the Group III competition are bouncing back and forth between II and III. That used to be the Pacific Oceania team but not for the last 10 years or so. The main thing for the team is that they reached their goal that has been a long time coming so I know from my days just how excited they are. Personally I'm pretty close to all those guys and I'm really proud of and happy for them," he said.

The fourth player for Pacific Oceania is Tahiti's Heimanarii Lai San.

Joining Pacific Oceania in being promoted to Group II in 2022 are Hong Kong, China and Vietnam, while Kuwait, Qatar, Sri Lanka were relegated to Group IV.

GCA

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first nipping Dandan Middle School, 5-4, before blasting Saipan Community School, 12-4, as the Lady Tsunamis conceded the game with time remaining due to injury to one of their players.

In the game against DMS, power-playing Azriel Fatialofa led GCA with 5 points. She also top-scored for the team in their route of SCS with 6 points. It was the first loss in three games for SCS.

FMS, meanwhile, kept pace with GCA with its third straight win following its heart-pounding 8-7 overtime win over DMS in the third game. FMS led at the half, 4-2, but DMS managed to tie the game after regulation, 6-6. In extra time, Priscilla Tomokane's basket proved to be the final score to give the San Antonio school the win. FMS was led by the 4 points of Tiana Mendiola with Tomakane back-stopping her with 3 markers. DMS absorbed its second loss in three starts.

In the final game of the day, Mount Carmel School edged Tanapag Middle School, 8-6, to level is win-loss card to 1-1. Mya Pangelinan paced MCS with 6 points, while the 4 points of Alana Camacho led the now 0-2 Tatagas with 4 markers.

Middle school girls caging resumes tomorrow with TMS taking on Chacha Oceanview and Hopwood Middle School 1 challenging sister team Hopwood 2 in the 4:30pm games. The 5:15pm matches will then have SCS squaring off against Dandan and MCS testing the mettle of GCA. The 6pm schedule will then have GCA immediately suit up against TMS and Dandan suiting up against Hopwood 2.

First Game

GCA 5 – Az. Fatialofa 4, Torres 1.
DMS 4 – George 2, Tomokane 2.
Scoring by halves: 2-2, 5-4.

Second Game

GCA 12 – Az. Fatialofa 6, Pugon 4, Hall 2.
SCS 4 – S. Yang 2, Tudela 2.
Scoring by halves: 2-2, 12-4.

Third Game

FMS 8 – Saralu 6, Diaz 2.
DMS 7 – Mendiola 4, Tomokane 3.
Scoring by halves: 4-2, 6-6, 8-7 (OT)

Fourth Game

MCS 8 – Pangelinan 6, Backe 2.
TMS 6 – Camacho 4, Eleisar 2.
Scoring by halves: 2-6, 8-6.

High school runners at the starting line of last Saturday's PSS/NMA Cross Country Qualifier on the road leading to Ladder Beach. MARK RABAGO

RODGERS

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runners who unbeknownst to them took the scenic route.

"I felt very happy about my time and the race course was great. I almost did the [open course]! The race for me was really humid on that day that was the main struggle for me overall I'm glad that I came first as it was so unexpected," she said.

Cabrera thanked the volunteer who yelled at them to come back after they ran past the 5K turnaround 30-40 feet.

"So close but this man who was one of the people who helped guide the race yelled loud enough that I heard him," she said.

Public School System athletic program director Nick Gross acknowledged the mistake on the part of organizers, but added that the event was just the second qualifier.

"It turns out in rainy season things grow pretty fast and what happened was the initial course that we had set was overgrown and we didn't had enough time to bush cut and clean it up. So, we were making some modifications on the original trail on game day and they may have been some miscommunication in the turning point in the different age levels. In the end, the results don't mean much as it's just basically a training experience," he said.

MHS' Dev Bachani, who topped the boys high school division in the first qualifier, said he was initially frustrated but quickly got over it.

"I was a bit mad at first because all that effort was kind of wasted but it's fine cause it's just qualifiers," he said.

The team competition for high school was won by MHS (boys) and SIS (girls).

In the 2K boys middle school division SIS' Moshe Sikkel won in a time of 10.23, followed by Francisco M. Sablan Middle School's Christian Lucero and Saipan Community School's Elijah Ye, both finishing at 11.26.

The girls contest was won by SCS' Abbie Kim in 13.02 with SIS' Suki Peng (13.07) and Aubrey White (13.15) coming in second and third, respectively. GCA won the team competition for boys, while SIS again topped the girls.

In co-ed 12U, Brilliant Star School's Akeem Edvalson ruled the roost in 7:02. Finn Altizer of SIS was second in 7.04, while Derance Benjamin of Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School was third in 7.43. SIS topped the team competition.

SIS' Jude Rayphand, meanwhile, topped the co-ed 9U after crossing the finish line in 7.2. GTC's Kylee Babauta was second in 7.42 with San Vicente Elementary School's Tamika Masga rounding out the Top 3 in 7.47. SIS also won the co-ed 9U division.

Run Saipan secretary/treasurer Ron Snyder said coordinating the PSS/NMA Cross Country Qualifier along with the International Coastal Cleanup Day 5K was difficult.

"The 5K had a really tough field. The lead pack of six runners missed the turn to come back to the finish and ran a full mile more. Missed turns have always been a part of cross country but we will work hard to make sure that the marshals are out in full force to ensure strong results [the next time]," he said.

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. seconded Snyder's assessment and explained that the club had fewer volunteers during the race because of prior commitments.

"It was just a difficult situation today. We were stretched very thin with volunteers. A bulk of our volunteers are in the 442nd 100th BN Echo Company and it was their drill weekend for them today. Volunteers are what make or break races. Hopefully we will have more for next year's race. I'm so grateful to the ones that helped us out today," he said.

In jest, Dela Cruz said Bachani and company probably just wanted to race with Marshall Hoskins who ran his last race on Saipan Saturday.

"All I can say is amazing job to those runners for going the extra mile with us today. They got the extra reps in today that will benefit them in the championships. They probably saw Hoskins and wanted to race him one last time too," he said.

Lamar Jackson carries Baltimore past Kansas City, 36-35 PAGE 17

Ko'Bees wins thriller over RNV in Tinian hoops PAGE 19

Pacific Oceania promoted to Group II

» Colin Sinclair and company beat Syria

By MARK RABAGO
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Colin Sinclair powered Pacific Oceania to a gritty 2-1 victory against favored Syria to gain promotion to Group II in 2022 in the 2021 Davis Cup by Rakuten Asia/Oceania Group III Tie last Sunday in Amman, Jordan.

The 26-year-old teamed up with Cook Islands' Brett Baudinet in the deciding doubles and defeated Kareem Al Allaf and Hazem Naw 6-3, 6-7 (2), 6-4.

Earlier, Sinclair knotted the tie with Syria at 1-1 after outlasting Al Allaf, 7-5, 6-7 (7), 6-4. Pacific Oceania went down 0-1 after Vanuatu's Clement Mainguy lost the opening singles to Naw, 6-2, 6-1.

The 718th ranked singles players in the ATP Tour said it was an incredible and surreal end to a weekend of amazing tennis in the Jordanian capital.

"It was a crazy day. I think I spent about 5 hours on court and to be able to come out and win that final set with Brett was really special. It hasn't really sunk in yet to be honest. As soon as we won we went straight to the hospital for COVID-19 tests and then I was on a flight a couple hours later at midnight with our coach Rich Breen. So I'm still trying to process it but very excited and can't wait for next year," Sinclair said in a social media message to *Saipan Tribune*.

Baudinet said Sinclair proved to be Pacific Oceania's ace against Syria, which topped Group C and were highly favored against their team that only finished No. 2 in Group A after Vietnam.

From left, Tahiti's Heimanarii Lai San, Vanuatu's Clement Mainguy, the CNMI's Colin Sinclair, Cook Islands' Brett Baudinet, and Pacific Oceania non-playing captain Richard Breen are all smiles after beating Syria to gain promotion to Group II in 2022 in the 2021 Davis Cup by Rakuten Asia/Oceania Group III Tie in Amman, Jordan.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"Colin played extremely well this week. His experience on tour really shone through and he handled the pressure situations like a pro. The CNMI would be so proud of this amazing athlete who has such a promising future in tennis, and for future Davis Cup [ties]," he said in a social media message to *Saipan Tribune*.

Baudinet then recounted the thrilling final set against Al Allaf and Naw.

"In the deciding doubles against Syria, Colin and I were down a break 2-1 in the third set, and they were serving at 40-15. We played some amazing tennis with a few big shots and came back to win that game and square it back up 2-2. Then at 4-4, deuce, Colin barely reaches a volley that hits the frame of his racket and falls over the net for a winner drop shot which we then go on to win the game and then break the next game at 5-4 to take the victory."

The veteran netter, who played his 59th Davis Cup tie, said although they started the competition slowly, everyone in the team was really expecting to get the promotion to Group II.

"We went into the Davis

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Grace Christian Academy's Azriel Fatialofa bring up the ball against Dandan Middle School during their the IT&E Interscholastic Girls Middle School Basketball League last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.
MARK RABAGO

GCA, FMS race to 3-0 record in middle school caging

By MARK RABAGO
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Grace Christian Academy and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School are currently leading the IT&E Interscholastic Girls Middle School Basketball League team standings after each registering their third straight victory last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Lady Eagles swept all two of their games last Friday,

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Rodgers, Cabrera top 2nd XC qualifier

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Rodgers

Cabrera

Grace Christian Academy's Theodore Rodgers and Saipan International School's Tiana Cabrera were the beneficiary of a mix up on the turnaround to win the second PSS/NMA Cross Country Qualifier last Saturday on the road leading to Ladder Beach.

Rodgers topped the high school 5-kilometer race in 19.5 minutes. He was followed by Pony Tang and Marques Dame, both of Marianas High School, with times of 20.11 and 21.2, respectively.

The boys high school winner, however, dismissed his victory as kind of a fluke since the top runners missed the turnaround after following the open cross country course.

"I don't really fully agree with my first place [finish] because the others ran past the place where they're supposed to turn around," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Cabrera ruled the girls high school 5K after crossing the finish line in 21.11. She was followed by teammates Serin Chung (24.05) and Audrey Castro (24.15).

The girls high school winner admitted she almost befell the fate of the lead

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